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Reflections on being a Canadian at Calvin

by Dianne Vrieling

Miss Vrieling is a Canadian student at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mi.

"I love Canooks" proclaims a poster in a history class at Calvin College. "Why," muses a Canadian, "can't they even spell 'Canuck' right? And how would they like to be called 'Yankees'? Though America is the "melting pot" of nations, Canadians are far from being quietly assimilated here in Grand Rapids, snidely known in Christian Reformed circles as "Jerusalem."

Canadian nonconformism is shown through our big national event at Calvin: Canadian Thanksgiving. We sing our national anthem with gusto, devour our food service's Thanksgiving meal with a little less gusto, and cheer our "home-grown" entertainment: renditions of Gordon Lightfoot's music, French-Canajun spoofs on the political situation, and skits performed in our best Yankee-Dutch. The Canadian flag, prominently displayed, disappears a few days later.

When I first came to Calvin three years ago, I was appalled that Americans didn't know where B.C. was. Some actually thought that British Columbia might be a country in northern South America. It's a little strange to give a geography lesson on Canada to a male American friend on your first date. A friend of mine from B.C. told her believing American friends that she had to get a whole new wardrobe to come to Calvin — not the "Back to School" routine, but a drastic switch from her usual fur parkas and hand-made moccasins. These friends assumed that the usual method for Canadians to get from the West to Calvin is naturally by dog-sled, camping out along the way in igloos. Most of these myths are disappearing, but in the main, Americans don't have much general knowledge about Canada.

Americans at Calvin can often be distinguished by regional differences, especially as these become apparent in their accent. Canadian students have their own idiosyncrasies too, but they're usually the same, whether the student comes from Toronto or Vancouver. We're a fairly homogeneous lot; we have a similar background in being first-generation Canadians, sons and daughters of Dutch-Canadians. Many of us have close ties with relatives in Holland — something that Americans (except some from New Jersey and California, whose parents also immigrated after World War II) generally don't share. But our English expressions don't come from our ethnic background; they're basic Canadian English. The differences come out in ordinary conversation with other students, but to be told by a professor in linguistics class that Canadian English is much like Shakespearean English (because of the way we say "wife" or "ought") — well, I don't know if that's a compliment or not!

Canadians at Calvin not only sound different; they often take other courses than the average student here. Calvin has various special courses set up for Canadians, such as Canadian history and Canadian political science. Many Canadians registered this fall for a course in Canadian literature to be offered during Interim (January, 1978). French classes and advanced Dutch classes are predominantly Canadian, and there are proportionately more Canadians in some religion and philosophy classes because certain professors are ideologically linked to the A.A.C.S. in Toronto.

Canadian students at Calvin are able to keep up with Canadian news reported in two newspapers received by the library: the *Toronto Globe and Mail* and the *Vancouver Province*. At one time I tried to have my Canadian subscription to *Time* magazine forwarded to Calvin, but the subscription was transferred from the Canadian office to the American one, so I received the American version of *Time* (which didn't have those first few pages of Canadian news). Letters from home are always eagerly anticipated, and disappointment and frustration are great when Canadian postal workers go on strike. During the fall of 1975, my parents drove three miles across the border to mail the letters in Washington, but many Canadian students weren't so fortunate.

Canadian politics influences us not only in the matter of mail strikes, but also with regard to the Canadian economy (ie. the Canadian dollar on the world market): we're not getting as much value for our money as we have in the past few years. With the current rate of exchange at 12%, Canadian students are paying approximately $400 more than anticipated for tuition, room and board, books, and travelling expenses this year. The financial aid office at Calvin is giving aid to Canadian students who presently receive financial aid from Calvin or the Canadian government.

I've often been criticized by people at home who think I should support the Canadian economy by studying in Canada, or who think that Canadian universities are superior to American colleges. Though I can't completely disagree with them, I have much respect for the Christian commitment of many Calvin professors, and I find that being at Calvin gives me an excellent opportunity to meet students from all over North America as well as from various South American and African countries. It even gives me a chance to get to know other Canadians!

Back to God Hour speaks to "underground" Arab Christians

Rev. Bassam Madany, minister of the Arabic broadcast of The Back to God Hour, has just returned from a trip to North Africa and the Middle East. During his visit to the area covered by his daily radio ministry of the Word of God, he spoke to Christians who regularly hold "underground" meetings for worship and fellowship. In countries in which the early Christian church disappeared, there is no legal basis for the emergence of a national Christian church. Believers in those areas resort to "underground" meetings.

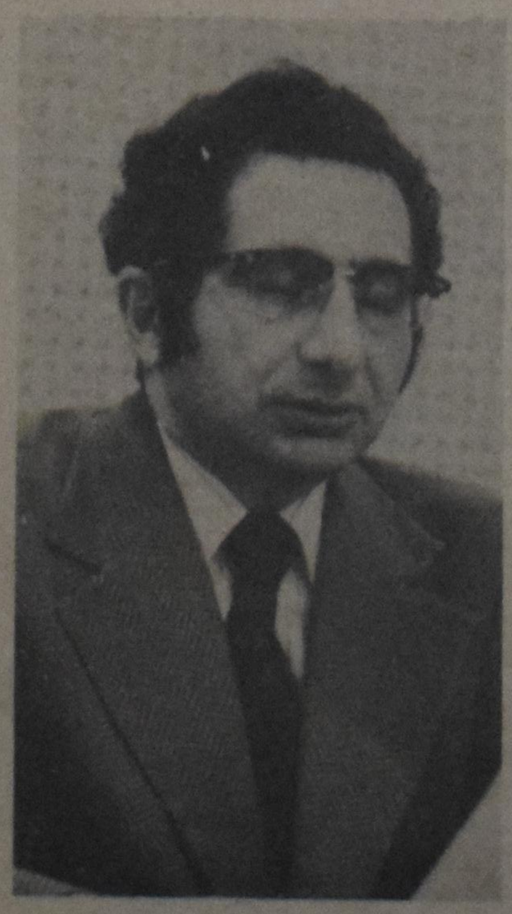
The Arabic broadcast of The Back to God Hour provides these young Christians with a daily diet of the Word of God and helps them grow in the faith through its literature ministry.

While he was on the three week fact-finding trip, Rev. Madany met with missionaries and Christian leaders, monitored a variety of Arabic radio broadcasts, and discussed the possibility of increasing radio coverage of the Arab world through radio stations in lands close to the target areas.

Rev. Madany reports that the trip gave him valuable insights into the religious situation in both Europe and the Middle East. He discovered that opportunities for spreading the gospel by radio are increasing, but he also found Muslim states putting greater emphasis on radio and the printed page in propagating Islam.

At present, there are some 20,000 listeners on the mailing list of the Arabic broadcast. They receive follow-up materials regularly in the form of pamphlets and books.

The Back to God Hour's Arabic language ministry is presently offering a free eight page brochure highlighting the work of radio missions. To obtain a copy, simply write to The Back to God Hour, 6555 W. College Drive, Palos Heights, IL 60463, and request the Arabic brochure.



focus

Bishops look at involvement

OTTAWA, ONT. (CCP) — "To be a Christian today means you have accepted Christ as the centre of your life and the responsibility to become involved with all people and the issues of the world. Our meeting's agenda reflects this", said Archbishop Gilles Ouellet, the newly elected president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB), as he summed up the General Assembly Conference of the CCCB.

In the week-long meeting, 82 bishops from across Canada dealt with topics as diverse as Marxism and the proper attire for priests at mass.

In their annual social message for 1977 entitled "A Society to be Transformed", the bishops pointed out the failures of today's dominant social structures, whether based on capitalism or marxism, to meet the fully legitimate aspirations of people. They urged Christians to break out of present patterns of thinking and acting, and become actively involved in building a social order based on Gospel values.

Native workers gather

GIMLI, MAN. (CCP) — More than 50 participants from seven denominations took part in an inter-church seminar for native workers at the Provincial Leadership Training Centre here. Anglican, Catholic, United, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Christian Reformed, and Mennonites were all involved, in the eighth and largest of these seminars for workers among Canada's native peoples.

The theme, "God's Action in our World", was highlighted by discussions on native housing in cities, and of the impact of proposed natural gas pipelines on northern life styles, as well as evaluating the evangelism that had brought Christianity to Indian and Innuit peoples.

United Church Minister Stan J. MacKay appealed to native workers to risk responding to the burning bush today, as Moses had. "I fear that we will allow the bushes to burn and be consumed without the recognition of God's purpose. We live in a tremendous idolatry which will destroy us and our traditions."

Adam Cutland, newly appointed as national consultant on native affairs for the Anglican Church of Canada, reminded the seminar group that 500 native students are now enrolled in 3 universities in the province of Manitoba alone. "Our students are still invisible," he said, "But in a few years their leadership will challenge society."

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NEXT WEEK

National Unity

ViewPoint

Christian bargain-hunting

The parking lot at the local mall was packed. Cars couldn't move. It was Boxing Day and the sales were on.

Bargain-hunting is not only limited to seasonal sales. We do it all the time. I remember when I bought my first new car as a tender teen-ager. I went out one evening on my own to look at cars.

"How much is that one?" I asked an aging salesman. He told me the price; somewhere around $3,000. "Sounds good. I'll take it." He smiled knowingly. "You just don't do that", I was scolded by family and friends. "You probably could have gotten it for $2700."

You never pay what they ask, was the lesson I learned. The same applies to house-buying. You must learn to dicker. I still have difficulty with that practice. You don't bargain with the milkman for a good price on a quart of milk or argue with the store manager for a good price on a loaf of bread. You have to pay the full price.

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No, we know that there are some areas where you are expected to "make a deal", like with cars and houses...and church. That's right. Church. There is a church membership fee which comes about this time each year in the form of a budget. The church adopts it. You adopt it. You get the total of the budget, the bottom figure, and you divide it by the number of families in your church and you get your average: so much per family per year, month, week.

Each church has her bargain-hunters, those people who look for a good deal when it comes to church membership and church responsibility. Some pay the average, some pay more, and some never pay. Some are responsible some are more responsible, and some are irresponsible.

But bargain-hunting does not only happen between the member and the church. It also happens between the church and the denomination office.

A generation ago, during the late '40s and early '50s, the denomination was essentially American. The denomination, in an effort to aid struggling Canadian churches, gave us a break when it came to paying the denominational quotas — that magical figure which represents the cost per family to run the denomination and its agencies.

The denominational office told Canadian churches to pay what they could towards the quota and many of them paid 50 per cent, or half of their actual fair share.

What is striking is that, in an age of apparent Canadian maturity, the churches in Canada are still fulfilling only part of their denominational quota commitment. We are not doing our fair share as part of the denomination.

We know that when a member's contributions to the church are low or nil, it is mentioned during a family visit. Perhaps the churches should be similarly reprimanded for continuing to seek a bargain when it comes to denominational membership.

Church structures have been established and many of them have been rebuilt to reflect modern conveniences. Several churches are committed to mortgages in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, yet pay only a half or three quarters of their quota commitment to the denomination.

When a family in the congregation gives little to the church and spends a great deal on house renovations or new clothes, elders point out that their priorities are wrong.

When churches give little to the work of missions and world relief and spends a great deal on itself, then her priorities are wrong.

You know, bargain-hunters tend to get into a rut. They are always looking for that good deal and they refuse to pay the full price for any commodity. The churches in Canada need to get out of that rut. They have received a bargain for too long.

Keith Knight

by Keith Knight

NewsViews

Automobile costs increase

It costs more to own and operate your car now than it did a year ago... almost 10 per cent more. Figures recently released by the Canadian Automobile Association show a 9.5 per cent increase over 1976 in the average cost of owning and operating a mid-size car.

The figure rose to 22.2 cents a mile or $2,218 in 1977 from 20.3 or $2,025 in 1976. The figures are based on the operation of a 1977 Chevrolet eight-cylinder Malibu four-door sedan equipped with standard accessories — radio, automatic transmission, power steering and brakes — and driven 10,000 miles annually for a period of four years before trade-in.

The cost of operating a standard-size car totalled $2,690 or 26.9 cents a mile, compared with $2,569 or 25.7 cents a mile in 1976, while operating cost of a subcompact totalled $1,839 or 18.4 cents, compared with $1,652 or 16.5 cents, a year earlier.

The largest increase for all cars are for insurance and depreciation, indicating the rise in insurance premiums and the rise in the prices of cars. The average of 22.2 cents a mile for owning and operating a mid-size car compares with an average of 17.2 cents in 1974 an increase of 28 per cent.

However, the variable costs in the past year for gasoline, maintenance and tires remained at the same level as those of 1976 at 6.75 cents a mile, with gasoline costs dropping to 4.90 cents a mile, from 4.94 cents a year earlier even though gasoline prices rose twice in the past 12 months. The drop in the level of gasoline costs reflects the improvement in fuel economy in the new cars, according to the automobile association's director of public policy.

The greatest increase in operating costs in the past year was in the fixed costs areas of insurance and depreciation. Insurance now costs more than gasoline and oil on some cars, while depreciation is a motorist's biggest expense item.

Insurance costs are based on fire and theft, collision, and property damage and public liability coverage, which totalled an average $554 in 1977, compared with $438 in 1976, an increase of 26.5 per cent. This compares with $282 in 1974.

The CAA notes that more than $15 billion a year is spent on car purchases, registration and licence fees, gasoline, parts, accessories and car insurance.

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Those are the figures and they are staggering. They underscore the fact that we are indeed a mobile society, that we like cars, and that we are prepared to spend a great deal of our money on them.

Car sales in the past year indicate that Canadians, and North Americans in general, are still not sold on the idea of buying smaller cars. We still like the big car with the smooth ride and air conditioned comfort, folks.

Large urban centres such as Montreal, Toronto, Edmonton, Vancouver, as well as a number of smaller centres are frustrated with the automobile from a more practical point of view. Thousands of motorists inch their way to and from work each day during the rush hour which often lasts three or four hours.

Those centres are encouraging the use of public transit to avoid the influx of thousands of cars each day. Public transit, or bicycling, appears to provide an answer to a very real problem. The use of buses, trains and subways, as well as car pools, reflects a keen awareness of both energy conservation and money management.

These kinds of trends will not make the automobile extinct. It will simply reduce their number by eliminating one of the two cars in the garage, thereby reducing personal debts and putting your money to better use.

Dateline: The World

by Johan D. Tangelder — News behind the News

What is new in the Far East? This question reminds us right away of political crisis, economic problems and typhoons. But there are noted news items you usually aren't informed about in your daily newspaper or through the T.V. and radio media.

One impact-making and life-changing event is the blossoming of evangelicalism. Churches are growing. Seminaries and Bible colleges report increased enrolments. New schools are being founded. These training institutions are strategic for the growth of churches. The hope of Asian evangelical leadership is rooted in graduates coming out of academically respected Asian seminaries. These are the people who have great influence at the grass root level.

The Asian Pacific Christian Mission has started a Bible school in Wlingi, Indonesia. Its main purpose is to meet the pastoral needs of the growing number of village churches in Indonesia. There is a great interest in the Philippines in training in Bible school and seminary levels. PABATS (Philippine Association of Bible and Theological Schools) reports continued growth. In our own institution in Bacolod we are working hard to improve the curriculum and increase enrolment.

Evangelical educators in Asia are also very much concerned about the cultural context in which they are working. Dr. Bing Rin Ro, editor of Asia Theological News, stressed that Asian evangelicals "do need to concentrate on questions concerning suffering, poverty, demon possessions, urbanization, communism, and other living Asian religions. Therefore, we must contextualize our curriculum. A syncretistic approach to local religions and customs is becoming more popular in a number of major denominational theological schools. Therefore, evangelical schools must preserve the historic evangelical faith in our content and in practical training for future Christian workers. Through the accreditation program, we can promote these ideas in theological education."

But not only the theological schools are expanding, but churches are growing as well. These two developments go hand in hand. The number of Christians in Indonesia has doubled in the last few years. In 1976, evangelistic newspaper ads resulted in 215 new churches established. These messages were inserted in predominantly Islamic newspapers and magazines and offered the readers Bible correspondence courses.

Many of those who applied for these courses have become Christians. The Jiwan Jyoti Bible Correspondence Centre in Uttar Pradesh, India, enrolled 2,845 new students this past summer. They processed over 36,000 lessons. Two new centers are being opened, one of them in Canada for work among Indian immigrants. In our own denomination, we are thankful for the continued spiritual and numerical growth.

Asia, once considered as solely a missionary-receiving continent, is now busy sending out its own missionaries. Some Philippine churches support a number of missionaries in neighbouring countries. There are approximately 30 supervised Korean missionary couples working today in different nations. There are also about 600 other Korean missionaries around the world, mainly pastors of overseas Korean congregations.

Another important news item is the proposed Congress on Evangelism for Malaysia and Singapore (Coemas). At the Lausanne Congress on Evangelism held in 1974, the Malaysian and Singapore delegates felt the need for their own national Congress. Much thought and prayer was given to this. The result today is that Coemas will be held from April 10-15, 1978 at the Seaview Hotel, Singapore. It is hoped that Dr. Leighton Ford, Dr. Stan Mooneyham and Bishop Festo Kivengere, a Bishop of Uganda who had to flee his country, will be able to participate. A number of outstanding workshops are also scheduled for this conference.

I thank God for these news items! They don't make the headlines in the secular press. Yet they tell us about the dynamic spread and impact of the Gospel message in Asia.

LETTERS

Attitudes and dancing

Dear Sir:

This letter is in response to the many articles written recently concerning the social dance as a part of the Christian community, in particular, Calvin's. As Calvin's handbook points out, "together we share fully the responsibility for maintaining an attitude and atmosphere on campus that is consistent with the purpose of the College."

Now, I believe, in a very real way, that the social dance (parties with music) as it is being currently conducted at Calvin is degrading to the Christian atmosphere at Calvin and is not in harmony with the mandate it has, that is, to nurture the glorification of God among the students, faculty and administration of Calvin. The glorification of God is the ultimate purpose of our existence.

In all the written discussion (that I have read) that has come out of Calvin over this issue, the only time the Bible is mentioned is in a reference made to I Cor. 6: 12-14 and I Cor. 8. These passages were mentioned in Calvin's article in Calvinist Contact, June 30, 1977. In future articles I would hope the Bible be used as a basis for points of view. We can't go for long without going off track unless we stick to the Bible (Ps. 119:105).

Dancing is mentioned in the Bible several times, in both positive and negative settings (II Samuel 6:14, 16 and Ex. 32:19). It can't be said then that dancing is definitely a Christian or non-Christian thing to do. It is plain to see that it is the attitude with which you dance that determines whether it is a sin or not. The very definition of sin is that sin is anything not done out of faith (Romans 14:23). Therefore if dancing is not to be a sin we must dance out of faith and to the glory of God. As Christians we most certainly have the liberty of dance because as II Cor. 3:17 states, "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom". However, we must be very careful not to use this freedom as a pretext for evil (I Peter 2:16).

As for the "dance" at Calvin, I think the Calvin College Board did a good job of describing the current "parties with music" in saying that "dancing is often done uncritically, uncreatively and not within the cultural mandate given to us to work constructively in God's creation". (CC June 30, 1977). In fact, there is nothing (besides the absence of alcohol) to distinguish the "parties with music" from secular dances. Not the music, nor the atmosphere nor the reasons for holding them. There is no indication that the policy on dancing which the administration has put forward will change the secular concept of dancing now held by students. Perhaps the "development of social dancing in a Christian manner ... etc." is nothing more than the "invented terminology", "to justify their stance" Rich Bouma (Chimes, Nov. 4) says it is.

As lax as the whole of Calvin has been on this issue so far it is due for some major revision and reform in admitting to their failure in fulfilling the cultural mandate given us as far as dancing is concerned. Until the student body has enough singular dedication to doing God's will and not their own will they be able to dance in a Christian way. When, and only when, this happens will we be able to dance with the prayer in our mind:

Take my hands and let them move,
At the impulse of Thy love
Take my feet and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Arnold Jagt, student
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Confessions and truths

Dear Sir:

Please allow me to express my concurrence with Mr. Haverkamp's concern for the purity of the church. Let those who believe that the church is not perfect observe that I said "purity". I am amazed at the ease with which a good number of our members nonchalantly shunt the confessions aside, and compare references to the confessions as on a par with the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church of the Middle Ages.

I have always believed that our confessions were a summary of the teachings of the Bible, and not a replacement but a witness to the whole Bible. If we consider the content and intent of the confessions, then not only do these apply to the teachings of the church, these ought to be also the convictions of our hearts, keeping in mind that for complete detail and history of redemption we always refer back to the Bible.

The reformed doctrine, as summarized in these confessions ought to be a way of life for the reformed believer. No one, not Dr. Boer, either has been able to come with legitimate refutations of these confessions because they are based on Scripture. If our churches strictly adhere to these confessions, and do mission work and evangelize accordingly, then situations similar to those in Vanastra would not even arise, because these 'babes in Christ' have been taught the best way, the reformed way. Then professions of faith according to the Reformed Creeds, as required by the Church Order, will not be and not become a problem.

Confessions and creeds maintain the unity in the church. As soon as these are put aside then all kinds of winds of doctrine start blowing and the unity becomes disunity. Let's maintain our confessions the truths and convictions.for which our forefathers fought and even died. We have a rich heritage in these, and no one discards a rich heritage.

H.Nymeyer
St.Thomas, Ont.

Biblical perspective on marriage

Dear Sir:

I am compelled to write a second time with regard to the same subject, but concerning some different aspects. It concerns Mr. Norg's letter (CC Dec. 16) commenting on the appeal of five members of the Clinton CRC to Synod 1977 and the relevant report in the Acts of Synod.

This letter of Mr. Norg creates misunderstanding because of its inaccuracy. Mr. Norg states: "I read in the 1977 Acts of Synod that Classis Huron, by its decision, has stated that a common law relationship does not necessarily exclude communicant membership in the CRC." He has not read very carefully. That was not Classis Huron's statement, that was an allegation — an assertion, without proof, made by one party who wished to interpret the action of classis that way. Classis, however, stated quite the opposite: "This decision should not be interpreted as applying to all similar cases nor as an approval or endorsement of common law relationships in general." And synod, upholding classis' decision, adds this statement: "An action of pastoral concern in a particular situation does not constitute a rule which fits all situations."

Mr. Norg goes on to complain that "no grounds for this statement are given whatsoever." Of course not, because the statement is untrue, it is an assertion without proof or ground — an allegation. Then he also makes two sweeping allegations: 1. "So it is possible, that a member in our church may partake in Holy Supper, go home and continue such a relationship." and 2. "My conclusion: To discontinue a common law relationship, when children are involved, is sin." Two Scripture references are then provided in support of the contention that classis and synod are wrong and misinterpret Scripture, namely Ezra 10 and Matthew 5 vs 32.

It is both regrettable and sad to so lose our perspective. The matter on which classis decided was not to allow or disallow a (or any) common law relationship. The decision was to allow an interview with a candidate for profession of faith. A person who was not a daughter of the church, but who through the evangelistic ministry of the church, through the work of the Holy Spirit "has experienced a true conversion and demonstrates in her life a changed attitude and behaviour" (Minutes Cl. Huron, Sept. 15, 1976).

Is it relevant to cite Ezra 10 and Matthew 5 vs 32? Is it right to quote the Holy Scriptures in order to support one's contention? Much more difficult than pointing the accusation of Matthew 5 vs 32 at someone is it to hear the Lord speak to me in vs 28 — "everyone who looks at a woman lustfully..." I do not have much of a response then, nothing but contrition. When the question was called at that classis meeting, I remembered the words of the Lord spoken to another woman whose conduct was the pretext for creating a controversy — "Neither do I condemn you; go, and do not sin again." (John 8 vs 11).

Norm Slothouber
Waterloo, Ont.

Repentance before action

Dear Sir:

"Evangelism is more than saving souls for Jesus," says Rev. Jacob Kuntz in his article in the December 2 issue. And he elaborates by explaining how Calvinists have always had a broader view of the Christians' task in the world. And I couldn't agree more. Christ didn't just come to save people; he came to redeem all of creation. Our rich Reformed heritage reflects our conviction that all of life is religion and that every aspect of it is to be an obedient response to God's revelation.

That's the Biblical principle. But now for the "toepassing," the application to our respective lives, as we seek to live in obedience to God's Word. We find ourselves in this world faced with, firstly, many Christians who have an incomplete view of the Christian life. They may, for example, stress only the fundamental aspects of being saved and being filled with God's Spirit. And we see it as our task to teach them "applied Christianity" in the form of Christian action in a wide variety of fields. My question here is: What do we do to reach these people? Do we work together with them, in order to upbuild and educate? Rev. Kuntz calls this evangelism. I don't think that's a good word for this kind of activity.

Secondly, we find in the world around us millions of people who do not know Christ. Kuntz says: "We have to do more than simply call people to faith in Christ." My question here: If we have to do more, we have to start with doing at least that: calling people to faith in Christ. And are we doing that? Because isn't that where it all starts, with hearts being turned to God? Kuntz says: "It is great when students in a school are confronted with Christ and find him, but we should offer them something more." Again a question: Aren't we so tied up in trying to offer more, that we forget to offer them the basics , or just don't get around to it?

I fully agree with the principle of Christian day schools, Christian action, etc. But let's watch out. Rev. Kuntz pulls Dr. Abraham Kuyper into the picture, and tells about all the Kuyperian activity and organizations. But what has happened to that by now? Have you had a good look around in the Holland of today? In my opinion: the heart is out of it. The Christian organizations seem to exist now largely for their own sake, and not as expressions of a heart committed to Christ.

So, let's start at the beginning. If we want to evangelize, bring the good news, let's start with calling hearts to repentance. Then the rest will have to follow. But let's not fool ourselves into thinking that we've done our task if we joined the Christian school society, the AACS and the CLAC.

Barend Biesheuvel
Calgary, Alta.

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Church Page

Halifax a new beginning, a new minister

by Dale Poel

Mr. Poel is vice-president of the Halifax, N.S. CRC consistory.

Participants in the November installation service in Halifax, N.S. CRC included, from the left, Rev. Harry Kuperus from Kentville; John Orkar, elder; Rev. James LaGrand, new minister; Robert Daley, elder; and Rev. Jerry Dykstra, associate minister recently installed in hospital chaplaincy in Halifax.

For many Dutch-Canadians the suggestion of Halifax brings to mind the termination point of a trans-Atlantic sailing — the docking, the immigration sheds and a train ride to farm lands and cities beyond. For reasons of geography and economics, however, the Christian Reformed Church in Halifax, Nova Scotia, has not been able to count upon an influx of Dutch immigrants as a source of church growth. Over the years some of our people and all of our ministers have undoubtedly realized this, but only in the past few years has the Halifax church begun to honestly come to grips with the consequences and implications of this fact.

After becoming "vacant" in the summer of 1976 the church postponed calling a minister while it completed an evaluation of its very existence and mission. Although the evaluation process included a formal vote on disbandment, the end result was a renewed determination to be the Body of Christ within our urban environment. A three-pronged strategy for church outreach was agreed to which included cooperation with an Anglican parish, renewed attention to our residential neighborhood and involvement with nearby senior citizens.

While the congregation was formulating these "programs" and thinking about calling a minister, the Lord was adding some special blessings. Without being the result of these new initiatives, the Lord added to our worshipping community a variety of people which emphasizes our urban environment and reinforces our desire to be a church for all people. A West Indian student couple who were married by our previous minister, Rev. Wayne Gritter, came with a request to baptize their new baby. The baby was baptized and the couple became full members. An Egyption family, members of the Montreal Coptic Orthodox Church, moved to our Halifax neighborhood and have become faithful participants in our church life. And, with the beginning of the new university year came new university students — under-graduates, outpost nurses, graduate students, Canadian, Dutch and Nigerian. In the middle of all this a minister with a special interest in the "church of all nations" accepted our call to be pastor.

This past November Rev. James LaGrand was installed as our minister. Rev. LaGrand was previously with the Garfield (Chicago) Christian Reformed Church and was most recently on leave to do advanced study in the Urban Theology Unit at Sheffield University and New Testament research at both Sheffield and Cambridge (England). This research was supported by an ecumenical scholarship from the British Council of Churches and, later, a grant from our denomination. Some results of this research were presented last fall at the biennal Christian Reformed Urban Ministries Conference in the form of a keynote address entitled, "The biblical and historical challenge to be an 'All Nations Church".

Rev. LaGrand and his wife, Virginia, bring with them to Halifax mission experience in inner-city Chicago as well as Nigeria. We are looking forward to an exciting time as they join our ministry here in Halifax. We ask for your prayers that God may bless our work together.

Church News

CHRISTIAN REFORMED

Accepted
-to Georgetown, Ont., Rev. John DeJong of Fruitland, Ont.

Called
-to Drayton, Ont., Rev. Anthony DeJager of Bowmanville (Rehoboth), Ont.

Declined
-to Goderich, Ont., Rev. Peter Kranenberg of Strathroy (East), Ont.

Candidates for the Ministry
-David Jonkman, 1003 Dickinson SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507 (616)452-1910
-Nico J. Peters, 908 Courtland ave E., Unit 302, Kitchener, Ont. N2C 1K5, (519) 743-3954.

New address
Rev. John DeJong, 4 Flamingo Court, Georgetown, Ont. L7G 1A2, effective Feb. 15.

A $1,200 gift?

That's right, a $1,200 Christmas gift. Well to be truthful the gift was really $1,218.26. As a gift it has been sent from Simcoe, Ontario via Toronto to Bolivia, South America, with Christian love.

For Christmas this year the members of the Immanuel Christian Reformed Church of Simcoe included the people of the Guarani tribe of south-eastern Bolivia on their christmas lists. Each child and each family was asked to give a present to the Christ child by giving a gift to the Guarani people. All these special gifts were to be received at a potluck supper, and most were.

The results were gratifying. For several years now Wycliffe Bible translators have worked among the Guarani people writing down their language and then preparing the manuscript of the Bible in the Guarani tongue. The Canadian Home Bible League promised to publish this manuscript once funds were available. We trust that since the funds are now available the Guarani will soon be able to read various portions of the Scriptures in their own language. Ralph Fluit, pastor

CANADIAN REFORMED

Accepted
-to Coaldale, Alta., Rev. J.D. Wielenga of Albany, Australia (Free Reformed).

Durham Christian High School officially opened

Durham Christian High School's new facilities in Bowmanville, Ont. were officially opened on Dec. 2, 1977 with more than 800 persons in attendance. The official opening and dedication attracted visitors from as far as Wisconsin, U.S.A. Tours of the classrooms, offices, library and lounge were held prior to the lengthy program which featured Dr. Joel Nederhood of the Back to God Hour as guest speaker.

At the eight o'clock meeting in the gym, after words of welcome and the singing of hymns, Rev. Fred Bakker of Whitby introduced the theme of the meeting by reading some verses from Leviticus describing the ancient Hebrew plan for a Year of Jubilee to be held every fifty years when slaves are to be freed, and conditions of justice restored.

The ceremony of dedication took the form of the passing of a symbolic key from the builders, Peter Vogel and Dirk Brinkman, to the president of the association, Henry De Jong of Baltimore. DeJong then thanked the builders for their thorough, high quality work, and for dedication to the task, and passed the key to the principal, Ron Siebenga. He accepted the key and responded by reaffirming his commitment to direct the operation of the school according to board policy.

Siebenga then articulated his conception of what the school should be and of his desire to lead a student to a reforming sensitivity for his own needs and those of other people. He said the school hopes to lead the student toward some form of creative work of service to his neighbour, and toward healthy, rewarding relationships with his "family" acquaintances, co-workers, and friends, in harmony with the rest of creation.

The chamber choir of the high school sang "Awake Psaltry and Harp" and Mayor Garnet Rickard extended congratulations to the association on the opening.

Then came the actual liturgy of dedication lead by Rev. Al VandenPol of Cobourg in which the people of the association renewed their commitment to education which takes place specifically in the context of the covenant between God and Man. Grade twelve student Margaret Meyer of Whitby presented a banner to the school as a gift from grade twelve and a symbol of the dedication. Combined choirs from Durham Christian High School and Knox Christian School sang "Be Thou My Vision" under the direction of Eileen VanderZwan.

The main address of the evening was given by Dr. Joel Nederhood, radio minister of the Christian Reformed Church. Nederhood spoke of the education at Durham as "covenant" education and "jubilee" education. He said that covenant education does not merely consist of the addition of religious activities to the regular curriculum, but approaches each subject in the curriculum from a self consciously chosen perspective. He described covenant education as optimistic, and, forward-looking. After Nederhood's speech, there was a solo by Dr. Keith Ward, English teacher at Durham, who accompanied himself on guitar.

Refreshments were served to the 800 people in attendance. A number of former students were on hand for the occasion. There was a generally thankful and positive spirit in the air which was no doubt enhanced by the long years spent in shabby portable classrooms. The new building is located on Scugog Road.

The Spirit of Discovery!

"We came to Dordt because we heard it could help us discover what an integrated Christian lifestyle is all about. And wow! What we heard was right! At Dordt we learned that an 'integrated Christian lifestyle' means letting God's word speak to *everything* we do. By everything we mean our studies in Psychology, Economics, Political Science, etc., our relationships with others, our eating habits, our dating, our sports activities . . . In fact, we met at Dordt and learned how our *whole* life ought to be a free, joyful, and obedient response to God's Word.

"We are graduating from Dordt this year, but what we have learned at Dordt still remains with us — the challenge to let Jesus Christ be our Lord in everything we do. Dordt offers a vision, a perspective that will challenge you, too . . . If you miss it, you'll be missing one of the greatest opportunities in your life."

Lloyd & Vicki Vanderkwaak
Psych; Social Services majors
Lloyd originates from Terrace, B.C. Vicki from Racine, Wisc.

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World Missions Update

Where God isn't like father

From a crowded and impoverished barrio in Argentina, two-year volunteer Ginny Walcott asks the question: "How can I teach these children that God is like a father when their own fathers shout and swear at them all day long, or are absent when the children need them most?"

Miss Walcott is working in the city of La Plata where the board for Christian Reformed World Missions has started several new churches among the poorer classes. Two-year volunteers like Miss Walcott concentrate on teaching women and children, help transport sick people and pregnant mothers to the hospital, and work in cooperation with Argentine Christians in the over-all program of the church.

Volunteers raise their own support and carry out tasks laid down for them by the mission. They must learn the language (Spanish) and identify as much as possible with the people whom they seek to serve. The CRWM presently has volunteers working with the regular missionaries in several Latin American countries.

Witnessing

NIGERIA—Nearly 50% of the enrolment at Hillcrest Grade School, Jos, where missionary children attend, is Nigerian. Teachers and house- parents at Hillcrest report exciting opportunities for witness to Nigerian students and their families.

New publication

CHINA—China is likely to loom large in the 21st century, and the church needs to prepare itself for service and evangelism among the Chinese of the future. The appearance of the Chinese World Pulse, published by the Evangelical Missions Information Service, Wheaton, Illinois, is an important step in the right direction. David Adeney, one of the men best equipped to analyze and communicate the situation existing in China and spiritual needs of that nation, has been appointed editor.

Missionary Support

The Board of World Missions gratefully acknowledges the participation of these churches in recently undertaking support of the following missionaries: Alto, Wis. — Miss Ruth Veltkamp; Burlington, Ont.—Rev. and Mrs. Henry Smidstra; Bethel, Demotte, Ind.—Mr. and Mrs. Alex Munro; Dutton, Mich. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Brinks; First, London, Ont.—Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Van Wyk; Wyoming Park, Wyoming, Mich.—Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Zaagman.

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by Rev. Ralph Heynen

PASTORAL COUNSELLING

The need for good listeners

Speech has become a means by which we can get out of ourselves and reach out to somebody else. It builds a bridge so that we can enter into the experience of another person or we can reflect the experience that we had within our own hearts. So often we try to open that avenue and then we so quickly close it again. When a person says, "How are you today?" he's not really asking for a report on the person's health, he is simply seeking to open up channels of communication...a way of sharing something with somebody else. Isolation, loneliness, can be very threatening.

Some wonderful things can happen when we are all by ourselves and alone in contemplation, but if we spend a lot of time by ourselves we feel a deep need to share something of ourselves with someone else. I know of widows who have lived a number of years alone and they often talk to themselves because there is nobody else to talk to. Or, they may have a parrot to whom they tell their problems, or a dog, but we need the contact of another person so that there may be a listening ear, that we can share something with someone else who is willing to respond to us. Helen Keller, as you remember, was deaf, dumb and blind. She was literally cut off from her world but she had a dedicated teacher who worked and struggled until she managed somehow to get through to Helen and they began to communicate. Gradually there was something in Helen Keller that was released and her potential became known and she was one of the great personalities of our day. It's that kind of opening that people need.

There are many people who have a tendency to withdraw from the realities of life, they are living in an imaginary world. They fantasize but when we lapse into fantasy, we're moving into a world that's no longer real. So, when we begin to talk about this world of fantasy, the world of our dreams, the world of our inner desires, when we express these things, we soon begin to sift out what is real and what is not real. If we can verbalize what we are thinking, if we could open up to someone else, we soon begin to see that some of the things that we have in our mind are really not rational. This was confirmed some years ago by an experiment carried out by a large company which provided counselors for the employees. The counselors could not go to the boss and try to change things for them, this was forbidden. They could not talk to management and say "you've got to change the position of this employee". They found two things were happening. One of the employees was annoyed with his work situation, he discovered when he was talking this over with a sympathetic and understanding person, a person who didn't judge him, or who couldn't fire him, or hire him, or promote him. Soon his problem didn't seem so big anymore. If he was able to talk about it, it seemed to disappear somewhat. And then the counselors found that the complaints often evaporated as they talked about them. As the employee brooded about his complaints, they became worse and worse but when he had an opportunity to verbalize his complaints, to express them, he began to realize that after all they weren't so important anyway. To talk about something is one way of correcting our thoughts, the things that we are concerned about. They have a tendency to reach down into our lives so that we can see that some of the things that we imagine are not real.

A man comes home from work and he's had a very frustrating day, things didn't go too well, he comes home and his wife says, "Look at the meal I prepared for you" and as he looks at it he says, "You know that I don't like some of this stuff that you prepared, you're just wasting money by preparing some of that fancy stuff when all I want is meat and potatoes." If the wife is an understanding person she may well realize that his complaint is not really against her or against the food, or against the things he sees on the table, but he's had a bad day and he hasn't been able to talk about it, he hasn't been able to share it, so he takes it out on other things.

This is often true, too, in church. There are people who communicate that they have certain problems and quite often they will come up with something that's rather highly intellectual. I've often had people tell me "I have a real problem with that doctrine of election" and I would promptly say, "I don't believe that your real problem is with the doctrine of election but you're basic problem is most likely something else." After awhile you begin to realize that they have a problem with the security of their faith, they don't quite know whether they're children of God or not. They begin to say, "Am I really elect?" But that's not what God asks of us. He said, "Do you believe?" This is the important thing, and if we are led to faith we don't sit back and begin to use dogmatics or rationalization of any sort but we start talking about the fact that our faith isn't as strong as we would like to have it be, and we begin to work our way through this.

One writer uses the illustration of a tea kettle on a stove. When you keep the lid on that tea kettle, and let it boil, it's going to start exploding, at least the cap is going to blow off, but when the cap is taken off and the steam is allowed to escape, the pressure is reduced, and the tea kettle is not going to explode. Speech is like that. When we feel inwardly that we have troublesome feelings and emotions — it's so good for us to be able to talk about them..to tell other people how angry we are, how frustrated we are, how sad we are, how lonely we are.

We talk about the fears, the inner pains that we have, and if we can find those people who are willing to listen to us, it can do us a lot of good. If you can be helped when other people listen to you, maybe you ought to also practice this same art by listening to others. Students in a university complained about the music boxes that they had in the student union because they made so much noise that they couldn't study. So installed in these music boxes, was a record which gave them three minutes of complete silence for a dime. Soon those records were used so much that they became scratchy, they had to be replaced. People were willing to pay for a few moments of silence.

We often feel that way in life. I've often heard wives say to me, "If only my husband would listen to me as you do, I wouldn't have to see a counselor." Learn the art of listening, listening to each other as husbands and wives, listening to children; let them talk because this is sometimes the only outlet they have to keep them from exploding. As Christians, shouldn't we learn the art of listening?

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Don't worry about what may happen tomorrow. The same everlasting Father who takes care of us today will also provide for us tomorrow and the next day. He will shield us from suffering or He'll give us the inner strength to carry the load of life and to come forth victorious.

Your executor: what to look for

The executor (executrix if female) is the most important person named in the will. He or she takes charge of your estate and becomes your personal representative after you have died.

The duties of an executor are numerous and therefore the law allows for remuneration which could be as high as 5 per cent of the estate to be paid to him.

While not a complete list, the following are some important duties for which the executor is responsible: Make all funeral arrangements; advise banks, insurance companies and creditors of testator's death; prepare a detailed inventory of the deceased's estate, showing all assets and liabilities; apply for benefits payable under the Canada Pension Plan; file the will for probate; pay all taxes and succession duties where applicable; act as trustee for the estate of minors who are to benefit under the will; engage a lawyer to act for the estate; be responsible to the heirs to ensure that a fair value is received, if any part of the estate has to be sold; distribute the assets according to the terms of the will.

Whom Should I Appoint?

Because of the personal nature and the number of duties to be performed by executors, an executor should live within driving distance, be a competent person, and above all, be someone who shares your basic religious and world-and-life view. The following are some suggestions as to the persons who are normally appointed:

A Spouse. Where the spouse is appointed, alternate executors should be appointed because of the possibility of both husband and wife dying at the same time due to an accident.

Mature Children. Many people appoint a mature son or daughter, or more than one child to act as co-executors. This has the benefit of keeping things in the family, including the remuneration paid to executors.

A Close Friend. Many people will appoint someone in whom they have full confidence such as a close friend, a business associate, or their lawyer. This should occur when a spouse or mature children could not handle the situation.

Charities. If you are planning to leave all or a major part of your estate to one or more charities, you may consider appointing several of the officers of the charity(ies) as executors.

Trust company. Trust companies generally are not interested in estates valued under $100,000. Some large and complex estates may wish to appoint a trust company, although in even these cases the person usually has his own lawyer and accountant doing work regularly. As such, these persons should be able to help the appointed executor adequately without a trust company.

Before appointing someone as executor of your will, that individual should be contacted and his/her consent obtained. There is no law that compels a person to act as an executor against his/her wishes.

Remember, you appoint (usually) your spouse as executor, and in case of both of you dying together, you also have in your will an alternate executor.

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First of five articles

The church in the mirror of the nineteenth century

by John D. Hellinga

Rev. Hellinga is minister of the Christian Reformed Church in Guelph, Ont.

Most people have unhappy memories of their history classes. The study of important dates and facts of the "hoary past" is a tedious and boring assignment. "History" is certainly not one of the most popular subjects for the student.

The teacher who has been asked to teach contemporary political, economic or social trends is in a more advantageous position. Everyone wants to understand "the present". We want to be "with it" and know our own times.

In one of my former catechism classes we discussed the subject: "Who are we, members of the Christian Reformed Church; what is our task in today's world and what may we expect as church in the future?"

It soon became clear that answers to such questions could only be found after we learned the answer to a prior question: "Where did we come from, what is our past?"

We are thankful that the people of God are still interested in the discusion of vital issues in today's church. For redeemed people of God one of the most urgent questions is: "We are redeemed — but for what purpose?" In other words: "What is our task as people of God in today's world?

Various, often conflicting answers are given to this question. Unfortunately, these conflicting answers often give rise to sharp conflicts among us. Some advance the thesis that we are redeemed in order to separate ourselves from the world.

For such believers the all-important assignment is to go into the world in order to snatch individual souls out of the world.

After all, you know this wicked world is in the devil's hand — in the devil's hand let it perish. Let us save as many souls as the Lord deems right to give us.

Others proclaim that we are redeemed to penetrate the world with the Gospel, the Gospel with good news not only for the individual soul but also for the world in which this soul lives.

With great fervor we discuss these issues, labeling each other with fancy names, some even calling for deliberate polarization among us. Both "camps" like to stock their arsenal with as many "proof texts" as they can find in the Scriptures.

These world-and-life-view skirmishes become especially humorous when both sides seriously proclaim that the church faces these issues for the first time in history. We often have the inflated opinion that the Lord placed His church for the first time on the face of this earth in our generation. Little do we realize that also in the problems we face there is nothing new under the sun. In fact, every age anew had to wrestle with these problems and had to find solutions to them in the light of their times.

May we ignore this historical struggle? By doing that we would isolate ourselves from the church of all ages and places. It would make mockery with the church's confession, "I believe one holy catholic, universal church." History is the unfolding or opening-up process of human culture. We, too, play a significant role in this process but the significance of our role can only be seen in the context of the unfolding process of human culture.

We must acquaint ourselves with the struggles, hopes and aspirations of a by-gone age, for in a real sense our struggles are a continuation of theirs. We are standing on their shoulders and we are building on the foundations laid by our forefathers.

In this series of articles we hope to take a look at some of the struggles of the Church of the Reformation in the nineteenth century. Why this particular century? Was not the sixteenth century, the age of Luther, Calvin and Zwingli, the classical age for the Church of the Reformation? Yes, this is true and we trust that the children of the Reformation are sufficiently acquainted with "the story of the Reformation" in the sixteenth century. The moving accounts of the nailing of the 95 theses on the chapel door of Wittenberg and of the heroic Martin Luther before the emperor in Worms have inspired us since grade school days.

However, the century prior to ours with which we should have a "natural", vital link is for many of us an obscure age. We have not maintained a living tie with her. We take it for granted that the 19th century Church of the Reformation continued to build on the foundation laid by the 16th century great reformers and that she flourished. Sad to say, nothing could be further from the truth. The life of the Reformed churches on the continent and especially in The Netherlands was at a very low ebb. The revival and reformation of the 19th century in Holland was as great a miracle of God's grace as the wonder of the 16th century's reformation in Switzerland and Germany.

The chill winds of rationalism swept the continent. God was dethroned and human reason tried to take His place. John Calvin's "Sola Scriptura" — "by the Word alone" was interpreted to mean, "the Word alone". The reformers of the 16th century had impressed the church with the mandate to think, act, move and develop a life-style in the light of the Word of God. Sad to say, in subsequent centuries, the church had reduced the great principle of "Sola Scriptura" to a cold, critical, rationalistic study of the Bible. The Word of God was no longer accepted as a "lamp for our feet and a light on our pathway." Instead, it was seen as a fallible book, which may contain in part the Word of God, an object which we can subject to our rational analysis, scrutiny and criticism. Man, instead of being judged by the Word, set himself up as judge of the Word.

The Bible, with its reforming and transforming message for all of life, became again as in pre-reformation days a book for the theologian and his church. This situation allowed liberalism, Arminianism, Rationalism and Modernism to gain more and more influence.

Seventeenth and eighteenth century Pietism, a valiant attempt to hold on to Scripture no matter what, and to defend at all costs their confessional tradition, failed to stem the tide of modernism and unbelief. They too failed to live out of the "by the Word of God alone" principle of the Reformation. They too refused to let the Word of the Lord shine on all of life, the public life of the marketplace included. In fact, Pietism looked away from the world and culture and in frustration began to equate real Christianity with one's personal, devotional, and ecclesiastical life.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Reformed life in The Netherlands was in a state of bankruptcy. In the course of this century, however, God in His marvelous grace caused a revival to take place in the church and various sectors of life. The fascination of this revival is that it started at the grassroots, among the "common", ordinary children of the Lord, known as the "kleine luyden". In subsequent articles we want to better acquaint ourselves with these people of God, who were used so mightily by our God to bring a much needed reformation in all of life. Their accomplishments for God's Kingdom caused one Christian historian to speak of the "Wonder of the nineteenth century."

Politics

R.C. bishops speak out

On December 1, 1977 a gathering of Catholic Bishops in Canada prepared what they call "A Pastoral Message" entitled *A Society to be Transformed*.

Part of the text of that statement is printed here in order to give you a flavour of what the thrust of the statement was. There are some new winds blowing in Catholic circles and statements like this one point to the fact that there is a renewal of a true Biblical witness in the Roman Catholic church.

The statement tries to make a break with those who would try to bring about change by means of a Marxist approach. Such an approach, they argue simply brings a new oppressor. The Gospel message converts men so that they "become new" and remake the social economic and political structures that cause human sufferings.

At the same time however, they encourage men to work, each from their own perspective as long as the goals they seek unite people in efforts for the creation of a society based on justice. The problem is that justice is not a word empty of meaning — it needs to be given content according to a scriptural understanding of what is just. Other perspectives, other actions can be similar on the surface to what the christian community might propose but when we put it as part of a total view the differences begin to show.

But that does not deny some of the positive insights presented here. Why not get the whole text and discuss it with your friends? The complete text is available from: The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 90 Parent Ave., Ottawa, K1N 7B1.

Ben Vandezande

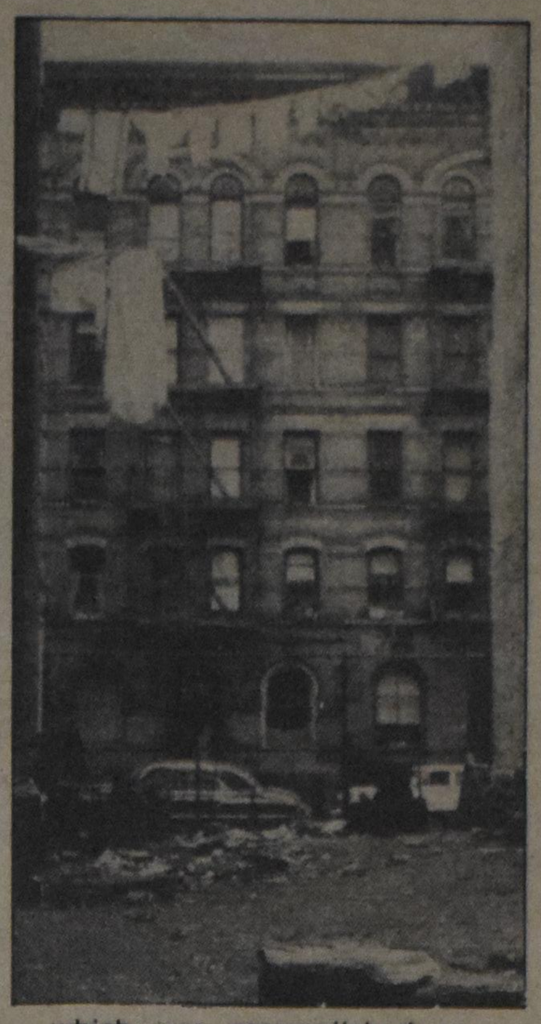
Two-fold purpose

We speak again about these matters to you, the Catholics of Canada, for two reasons. We invite you to get more involved in reshaping society, and we urge a particular form of involvement. First, in the name of the Gospel, all Christians must involve themselves in transforming our ways of living and our social and economic structures. The Lord calls Christians to be present in every search for new or renewed ways — new or renewed techniques, plans, programs, institutions or systems — to resolve today's difficulties. Secondly, we stress once again that Christians must be leaders in identifying and promoting the solutions that come only through new or renewed values, attitudes and relationships.

At any period, ideas rule the world. People are guided by the values carried by current ideologies. For our part, we find in the Scriptures an idea of justice which lights the way for today. People will see their rights and needs respected and satisfied to the extent that men and women relate to one another in terms of justice and equality, and work together to shape institutions and structures according to these values.

Reasons for Hope

The difficulties we face are for you and for us a time and a place for making the incarnation and redemption of Christ ever more real in today's world: "The Christian's hope comes primarily from the fact that he knows that the Lord is working with us in the world, continuing in His Body which is the Church — and, through the Church, in the whole of mankind — the Redemption



which was accomplished on the cross and which burst forth in victory on the morning of the resurrection. This hope springs also from the fact that the Christian knows that other men are at work, to undertake actions of justice and peace working for the same ends."

A central theme running through the scriptures is that we come to know God, to experience him truly, by loving and respecting others in seeking justice for the poor, the disinherited, the oppressed, the aged, sick and imprisoned. This love requires that we fully respect the rights of others, renounce any will to dominate, and establish the truest possible justice in all our relationships. The foundation of this true respect is the love that God has for everyone without exception. God is love. In Christ the Father loves all of us so that we may love one another, a love that is the new commandment. Indeed, if we do not love other people whom we can see, we cannot love God whom we cannot see. This kind of love leads on to a justice that seeks to promote greater equality among people.

On Mount Sinai, God joined with his people in a Covenant that was renewed in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Inheritors of that Covenant, Christians have received the mission to reunite all people with God by undertaking, as an ongoing challenge,

Continued on page 16

Doing justice, loving mercy

Study Outline #3

In Christ, we have the incredible privilege of being righteous. That is a gift from God — full and free. So, we have been declared righteous and we have also been made righteous, because what God says, happens. "All God's ways are justice" (Deut. 32:4), and He has set us right again so that we can walk in those ways. That is why He not only declares us righteous but makes us righteous so that we can mirror Him.

So, we are set right (every day again!) with God so that we can do justice to our neighbour. That is one of the dimensions of the kingdom that Christ will bring (Isaiah 11:4, 42:1). If we are doing justice, it will mean we: a) prophetically proclaim God's righteousness to our neighbour. If we do not do that, we do an injustice — we refuse to image God. At the same time, our righteousness is not exhausted by words. b) We must be doing justice in our deeds in order to demonstrate that we are once more "kings" who do what is right on behalf of God. Finally, c) such action will result in sacrificing ourselves for the cause of justice. We do not live in a creation free from sin, so in our attempts to do justice and so love our neighbour, we will often lose much of what we have or are for the cause of God's justice in the world.

Speaking of and doing justice is one of the many ways we are called to serve. It is one of the ways that God calls us to be busy in restoring society so that it, too, will honour Him. To do justice is to speak those words and do those deeds that create the room and make it possible for all men to concretely live a full life before the face of God so that in all of our personal lives and in the life of our social institutions we may see each person having the opportunity to fulfill his calling to serve God. (N.B. To do justice does not guarantee the response on the part of one's neighbour, but it does create room for loving obedience to God.)

Feedback:

1. Why is it not enough to proclaim justice as prophets to our time? Can you think of a way in which we protest injustice on the one hand and yet by our actions encourage that same injustice to exist?
2. Can we do justice if the people we are working with are not set right with God? (N.B. Isn't that what God did?) Secondly, what good does it do to create just social conditions if men have not been converted?

Our doing of justice is as near as your neighbour. You do not have to be an M.P. or a judge to do justice. There are enough examples of personal injustices to keep us busy full-time trying to bring the healing of God's justice. That will mean coming to the relief of those who have been broken (alcoholic, the starving, the runaway, the homeless, the unemployed, etc.). We can do much (more!) personally.

And our work in these areas will help us to see quite quickly that we cannot work alone (humanly speaking). We need to work as a community of people who can share gifts and make a more complete contribution to caring for the wounds of injustice. Again, that is not "for those who are interested in those things." All of us are just; all of us are called to do justice.

But we as a community of Christians are not only to be the Red Cross corps of our world, dashing out to pull in the wounded, without at the same time bringing justice to those areas and institutions that cause the wounds in the first place. That will mean we must try to create social conditions that are more just, that enable men to fulfill their calling before God. (For an interesting comment here, read: Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger by R. Sider, pp. 203-205.)

This point can further be explained by an example. I happen to live in grape country where acres and acres of vines are tended to produce grapes of all varieties. The problem is that vines don't grow only in the field. I have some in my backyard too, At least I had some. After some sweat, scratches and surprises, the ones that were cutting the life out of our evergreens are cut back. The trees are growing much better now.

And that is often what politics is about. The good things in society have no room to grow because other things come to choke the life out of them. It is not that the "choker" has no right to exist, but it has to stay where it belongs. Justice is a matter of making sure each area of life has its own place to develop, and sometimes it becomes necessary to cut back on that which would choke positive development.

But justice is more than that, too, because simply cutting away the "chokers" does not guarantee that life will flourish. It only gives the room for the evergreens to grow. What my evergreens need now is nurture, encouragement (no, I don't talk to my trees!) and proper treatment. Once they have the room to live, they must be nurtured to live a flourishing life.

Once the room has been guaranteed to that area of life, encouragements must be given to make possible the development of all areas of society to the honouring of God.

Unfortunately, today's politics is not as simple as our garden. There is much brokenness there. Much of that is because God's stewards have left the garden of politics for the safety of the church, or their family. What we see in the garden now is often a maze of twisted choking of life rather than a careful nurturing of our society's life to the honour of God's name.

We must become gardeners again, protecting the weak from the abuse of the powerful, protecting the right from the wrong, punishing those who would hurt, and restoring to life those who have been broken.

Feedback:

1. Using the example of a woman whose husband has left her with 2 children aged 5 and 8, explain how we could both say and do justice: personally (ie.) you as a loving, just neighbour, communally (ie.) as body of Christians working together to do justice, and corporately (ie.) by means of institutions and structural and sccial change.
2. Once you have finished #1, ask yourself this question: "Is there any difference between what I suggest here and evangelism?" Hopefully not, doing justice is evangelizing.

Hoe moeten we leven?

Deze vraag wordt telkens gesteld. De vraag naar onze levensstijl. We weten echter heel goed dat we een christelijke levensstijl behoren te hebben. In Link, een mooi blad voor de Christian Reformed Churches van Classis Toronto, werd in het december nummer van 1977 gevraagd: what about our new year's parties? hoe brengt u de oudejaarsavond door? en dan blijkt uit dat artikel zonneklaar dat we ook de oudejaarsavond op christelijke wijze moeten doorbrengen. Nogal logisch. Je ziet elkaar immers de volgende morgen ook weer in de kerk! Nieuwjaar viel immers ook op zondag dit jaar, zodat er van uitslapen helemaal geen sprake kon zijn.

De oudejaarsavond is al weer voorbij als u dit artikel leest. Link kwam net op tijd. Het vorig jaar, of was het al langer geleden, las ik in Link een dergelijk artikel, dat zich ook al bezig hield met onze 'parties', b.v. onze bruiloften. En toen werd er natuurlijk ook heel duidelijk op gewezen dat onze bruiloften christelijk behoren gevierd te worden! Nogal logisch, de Heer Jezus wordt immers ook steeds als de ''Eerste'' in het huwelijk aangewezen en aangeprezen bij de kerkelijke huwelijksvoltrekking. Zonder Hem gaat het eenvoudig niet!

Toch zijn onze begrafenissen stukken beter bezien vanuit de christelijke levensstijl dan onze bruiloften. De Prediker schijnt dat ook al opgemerkt te hebben. Hij schrijft nl; ''het is beter te gaan naar een huis van rouw dan te gaan naar een huis van feestgelag. Verdriet is beter dan lachen, want bij een treurig gelaat is het met het hart goed gesteld.'' Op een andere plaats schrijft hij echter dat er voor de levenden hoop is, immers'' een levende hond is better dan een dode leeuw.'' Daarom roept hij ons op tot ''leven''. ''Welaan dan, eet uw brood met vreugde en drink uw wijn met een vrolijk hart. Laten uw kleren altijd wit zijn en olie ontbreke niet op uw hoofd. Geniet het leven met de vrouw die gij liefhebt, al de dagen uws ijdelen levens, die God u geeft onder de zon.''

U kunt hieruit opmaken dat het bij een christelijke levensstijl gaat om een goede gesteldheid van het hart. En de Spreukendichter roept ons tot de volgende taak: ''Behoed uw hart boven al wat te bewaren is, want daaruit zijn de uitgangen van het leven''. Het hart is de bewaarplaats van de woorden en uitspraken van de wijze. Dat hart moet bewaard worden, moet beschermd worden tegen de zonde. Daar, in het hart vallen de beslissingen, vanuit dat hart komt het leven te voorschijn. U leeft zoals uw hart is. Uw gedragingen zijn het gevolg van wat er zich in uw hart afspeelt. Gispen zegt: ''Omdat in het hart de beslissingen vallen, is deze vesting van de grootste betekenis, moet zij boven alles beschermd worden. Men moet ook zijn mond, zijn ogen bewaren tegen verderfelijke invloeden; maar het belangrijkste is het hart''.

Dan zegt de Spreukendichter toch eigenlijk hetzelfde als wij, wanneer we er op wijzen, een christelijke levensstijl behoren te volgen. En hij veronderstelt in elk geval zoveel begrip bij zijn hoorders dat ze behoren tot de goede verstaanders die slechts een half woord nodig hebben. Hij zegt b.v. Doe van u weg de verkeerdheid van uw mond, laten uw ogen rechtuit kijken, maak effen het pad voor uw voet, en wijk noch rechts noch links, en houd uw voet verwijderd van het kwade. Er is dus wel ter dege uit deze uitspraken op te maken dat er tussen ons en de zonde afstand moet zijn. En dan komen er zonden in de gedachten die we kunnen bedrijven met onze mond, met ons oog, met onze voet.

We worden opgeroepen tot veilig verkeer! Gispen wijst op het beeld van de reiziger die de weg, waarlangs hij gaat, goed in het oog moet houden. Anders komen er botsingen of valt hij in een afgrond.

Wij moeten op betrouwbare wegen gaan, en steeds rechtshouden, en niet afwijken noch naar rechts, noch naar links. De wegen die van de hoofdweg afgaan, zijn toch alle doodlopende wegen. Als we die zijn ingeslagen, moeten we terugkeren, naar de hoofdweg. De Bijbel laat het wel merken dat de Heer er erg in heeft dat wij toch een neiging hebben om af en toe werelds te leven. We willen wel christenen zijn, maar toch af en toe de bloemetjes eens buiten zetten.

Ons hart is alleen dan goed gesteld als de Heilige Geest de ruimte heeft om er te werken naar Zijn welbehagen. In die vesting, die van zo grote betekenis is voor ons christelijk leven, moeten we de Heilige Geest niet tegenwerken. Eerder moeten we zeggen: u kiest mijn hart tot zijn koning. En omdat vanuit het hart de uitgangen des levens zijn, is het van zo groot belang dat we ons hart behoeden. En de beste hoede is de inwoning van de Heilige Geest. De Heer Jezus heeft gezegd:'' ... hoeveel te meer zal uw Vader uit de hemel de Heilige Geest geven aan hen, die Hem daarom bidden?

En, we weten zo heel goed dat we een christelijke levensstijl behoren te hebben en te volgen. Zo'n stijl begint met het gebed om de Heilige Geest, en wordt uitgewerkt in gemeenschap met de Heilige Geest, tot Gods eer en tot onze blijdschap. De wereld zal dan b.v. gaan zeggen: die christenen, die kunnen nog eens feestvieren.

J. VanHarmelen

Christelijke Geref Zending bestaat 50 jaar

Dit jaar is het vijftig jaar geleden dat de Christelijke Gereformeerde Zending haar eerste zendeling naar Midden-Celebes uitzond. Dat was ds. A. Bikker, die in 1930 gevolgd werd door ds. M. Geleynse. Door hun arbeid is in het Mamasagebied een kerk ontstaan, die nu meer dan zestigduizend leden telt. Dit artikel is overgenomen uit Kerknieuws, 28 oktober.

Nieuw begin

In 1892 moesten de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken een nieuw begin maken met de zending. Aanvankelijk hadden zij echter de handen vol aan reorganisatie binnen eigen kring. Daarom duurde het tot 1906 voor de synode een positieve uitspraak deed en het eerste deputaatschap (toen nog commissie genoemd) voor de zending benoemd werd. In datzelfde jaar, om precies te zijn op 1 november 1906, verscheen ook het eerste nummer van het zendingsblad 'Uw Koninkrijk Kome' onder redactie van ds F. Lengkeek te Harlingen.

Mamasagebied

Toen begon het zoeken naar een geschikt zendingsterrein en naar studenten die aan de Theologische Hogeschool te Apeldoorn opgeleid wilden worden tot missionair predikant. Die opleiding zou echter vier jaar duren en daarom werd ds A. Bikker, die zojuist beroepen was te Hilversum, gevraagd een aanvullende opleiding van een jaar te volgen in het zendingshuis te Oegstgeest. Via contacten met ds H. Janssen, de toenmalige legeren vlootpredikant in Indonesie, liet het deputaatschap tenslotte haar oog vallen op het Mamasagebied op Midden-Celebes (Sulawesi). Het centrale gedeelte van dit eiland werd bewoond door Toraja's, die slechts zeer oppervlakkig — via het zendingswerk van de Protestants Indische Kerk in Mamasa — met het Evangelie in aanraking waren gekomen.

Pioniersarbeid

Het gouvernement van Indonesie verleende de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken toestemming om zendingsarbeid in het Torajaland Mamasa te verrichten en in januari 1928 kon ds Bikker zijn werk beginnen. Twee jaar later volgde ds M. Geleynse, die zijn opleiding aan de Theologische Hogeschool te Apeldoorn inmiddels had voltooid. Mede door de komst van de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken hebben de laatste generaties veranderingen doorgemaakt, die revolutionair genoemd mogen worden. Door het pionierswerk van de twee missionaire predikanten werd de 'Gereja Toraja Mamasa', de Torajakerk, geinstitueerd, die nu zo'n tweehonderd gemeenten telt met ruim zestigduizend leden.

Contacten verbroken

Maar het bleef niet bij het oprichten van een kerkgemeenschap alleen. De Christelijke Gereformeerden besloten ook mensen uit te gaan zenden voor medische hulp en gezondheid, voor onderwijs en voor sociaal werk. Toen ook dit werk behoorlijk op gang begon te komen, moest echter het contact met de Gereja Toraja (tijdelijk) worden verbroken door het aanbreken van de Jappentijd. Ds Geleynse, ds Bikker en enkele anderen werden geinterneerd naar Japanse kampen. Na de bevrijding kon de familie Bikker om gezondheidsredenen niet meer naar het Mamasagebied

De ''witte kerk'' die in 1938 onder leiding van ds Bikker werd gebouwd

terugkeren. Ds Bikker werd vervangen door ds G.H. Polman, terwijl ds Geleynse zijn plaats in Makassar weer innam. Het werk werd voortgezet en zelfs uitgebreid. Deze opleving zou echter niet van lange duur zijn. Het 'rampjaar 1950' brak aan. De toegang tot het Torajaland werd vrijwel onmogelijk gemaakt door de guerilla's die de bevolking tyranniseerden. Ook de toegang tot Indonesie werd zeer bemoeilijkt; visa voor nieuw aangetrokken zendingswerkers werden niet verschaft. Alleen ds Geleynse kon vanuit Makassar nog enig contact met het zendingsterrein onderhouden. Voor de overige zendingswerkers zat er niets anders op dan terug te keren naar Nederland.

Nieuw zendingsterrein

De Torajakerk was inmiddels goed in staat om op eigen benen te staan en haar zaken te behartigen. Daarom werd op de synode van 1956 de vraag aan de orde gesteld 'of de tijd niet is aangebroken om Celebes als zendingsgebied los te laten en om te zien naar een ander zendingsterrein'.

Vendaland

Terwijl een onderzoek naar andere mogelijkheden gaande was, werden de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken benaderd door de Gereformeerde Kerk van Zuid-Afrika met de vraag of zij een deel van het Vendaland in Noord-Transvaal wilden overnemen. Dit verzoek werd nader bestudeerd en in het voorjaar van 1961 was het zover dat het echtpaar Helm als zendingsartsen en ds L. Floor als missionair predikant naar het Vendaland uitgezonden konden worden. Er was toen reeds een kleine gemeente van driehonderd gedoopte leden opgericht, die de kerk van Mutale vormden.

Geestelijk leven van de Bantoe

Geesten en magie spelen een belangrijke rol in het dagelijks leven van de Bantoe. Hij is geneigd om achter elke gebeurtenis die volgens zijn besef niet normaal is, een geestelijke oorzaak te zoeken. Zo worden ziekte, droogte, onvruchtbaarheid, dood, buitengewone begaafdheid en succes herleid tot de magie.

Een zendeling die het Evangelie van Jezus Christus predikt, moet terdege rekening houden met deze totaal andere denkwereld. Want waar twee verschillende religies met elkaar in aanraking komen, bestaat het gevaar van het syncretisme, de vermenging van heidense en christelijke waarden.

Boekhandel

Er is sinds 1961 veel gebeurd in Vendaland. Onder leiding van het echtpaar Helms is het hospitaal te Siloam (hoofdstad van Vendaland) uitgebreid en zijn medische voorzieningen verbeterd. De organisatie van het kerkelijk leven is op poten gezet. Bantoemensen worden opgeleid aan de Theologische Hogescholen om voorganger te worden bij de medechristenen. Het onderwijs is verbeterd; kinderen en volwassenen leren lezen in schrijven. In 1968 werd een zendingsboekhandel gesticht, die voortgekomen is uit het colportagewerk van zuster Hangelbroek. In de boekhandel — 'Mbeu' genoemd, wat 'zaad' betekent — worden behalve schoolbenodigdheden ook bijbels, bijbelgedeelten, zendingsmateriaal en andere christelijke lectuur verkocht.

Afbouw

Inmiddels zoeken de deputaten voor de zending alweer naar een derde arbeidsveld. Het werk onder de Toraja's wordt nu alleen nog financieel gesteund, en ook in Vendaland is het werk aan afbouw toe. Verwacht wordt dat over een jaar of acht de kerk van Mutale geheel zelfstandig zal zijn. En dan zouden de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland graag weer een nieuw zendingsterrein tot hun beschikking hebben. Om het Evangelie uit te dragen tot de voleinding der wereld.

Marjolein A.S. Voorberg

En wie is Ge Verhoog?

Voordat we met een nieuw vervolg verhaal beginnen willen we u kennis laten maken met de schrijfster Ge Verhoog. Op onze uitnodiging schreef zij het volgende artikel over haarzelf en de oorsprong van de vervolg verhalen die in C.C. verschenen en over het nieuw verhaal Pieter Vermeulen, dat volgende week begint.

Nu mijn vierde en wellicht laatste vervolgverhaal geplaatst gaat worden is het niet on-interessant, U iets van mijn beweegredenen, zoveel voor Uw blad te schrijven, mede te delen.

Het eerste boek "Bloeiende amandeltak" betrof de schoolstrijd in ons land, velen Uwer welbekend. Ik trachtte het zwaar godsdienstige Gelderland naar voren te brengen. Het tweede "De zoekenden" was de nu nog heersende diepgaande taalstrijd tussen twee bevolingsgroepen in Belgie en het derde "De keus van 't smalle pad" haalde ik grotendeels uit familiepapieren. Het vierde "Pieter Vermeulen" omvat de geschiedenis van een jonge onderwijzer, die de moed had in een afschuwelijk oord, volkomen eenzaam en langzaam groeiend naar een gehucht bij diep zedelijk gezonken mensen te gaan werken. Hij werd de pionier van het christelijk nationaal onderwijs in geheel Kennemerland: de landstreek langs de kust van de Noordzee en IJmuiden-Beverwijk-Santpoort-Haarlem. Ik herinner mij nog de begrafenis van de heer Vermeulen; ik was toen vijf jaar. Mijn Ouders waren zeer bevriend met de familie Vermeulen. Hieruit volgde, dat wij hechte vriendschapsbanden hadden met de kinderen en kleinkinderen van de heer en meyrouw Pieter Vermeulen.

Ik ben geboren in IJmuiden-Oost; mijn Ouders kwamen uit de Haarlemmermeer (Zwanenburg). Na hun huwelijk in 1910 woonden zij drie jaar in Amsterdam om daarna zich te vestigen in het opkomende Velseroord de opkomende stad, die de diepe ellende van de kanaalgravers was vergeten en zich ophief tot een indrukwekkend handelscentrum. Aan die onstuimige groei heeft mijn Vader ongelooflijk veel gedaan; niet alleen op het gebied van de handel maar ook op het gebied van kerk en school. Mijn Vader was 29 jaar voorzitter van het schoolbestuur en talloze jaren ouderling van de kerk en voorzitter van de Commissie van Beheer. Mijn Moeder richtte zich voornamelijk op het stille werk van hulp in nood: ik herinner mij nog levendig de vele ziekenbezoeken die zij bracht en mij vaak meenam naar de arme, oude, vervallen buurten.

Velseroord werd Ijmuiden-Oost; wij groeiden op in een bloeiende stad, die geen enkel verband had met de rampzalige omstandigheden, die heersten tijdens de kanaalgraving en het leven op de heide, zoals het latere Velseroord werd genoemd. Velseroord werd bevolkt door bewoners uit alle landstreken van Nederland en dit is de oorzaak van de mentaliteit van IJmuiden-Oost: ruim denkend en geen dorpsgeest; een bloeiende Middenstand.

Wij waren thuis zeer gelukkig. De onverflauwde arbeid van Pieter Vermeulen vond ook in ons gezin voortgang.

De tweede wereldoorlog 1940-1945 heeft IJmuiden West en Oost grondig verwoest. Er is daarna een nieuwe stad gebouwd, modern, mooier en groter — de opbouw werd krachtig ter hand genomen, snel en goed, maar wij kunnen niet vergeten, hoe wij over de puinhopen van IJmuiden Oost en West hebben gelopen. Tegelijk vergeet ik nimmer, hoe de Canadezen als onze Bevrijders vanuit Amsterdam Kennemerland binnenreden en ik met broers, neven en nichten een van de eersten was, die een Canadese tank beklom met een oranjevaantje in de hand, om een eind mee te rijden in deze glorie!

Wat mijzelf betreft: ik schrijf reeds vanaf mijn twaalfde jaar. Ik mocht veel publiceren: ruim 300 korte verhalen; wat poezie; veel artikelen; 5 vervolgverhalen en in totaal 13 boeken. Mijn eerste roman werd in 1967 bekroond met een eerste prijs in een romanwedstrijd. Ik schrijf onder eigen naam en schuilnaam.

Ik heb de kans, veel te reizen: o.a. 3 maal naar Canada, voorts Amerika, Egypte, Spanje, Portugal, Oostenrijk, Hongarije, Noorwegen, Zwitserland, Yougo-Slavie enzovoort.

Tenslotte wil ik graag een kleine toelichting geven op het komende verhaal. Amsterdam dreigde ten onder te gaan als hoofdstad en handelscentrum door de fatale dichtslibbing van het IJ, waardoor de zeevaart met andere werelddelen ernstig belemmerd werd. Drie eeuwen heeft men naar een oplossing gezicht tot o.a. Koning Willem I omstreeks 1820 voorstelde een kanaal de graven, dwars door de duinen vanaf Amsterdam naar de Noordzee. Dit plan is na veel tegenstand uitgevoerd tussen 1865 en 1876. Zo ontstond het Noordzeekanaal, wat Amsterdam door de vrije zeevaart weer in verbinding bracht met de grote wereldhandelssteden.

Amsterdam wilde geen dorp of stad aan de havenmond uit vrees voor concurrentie. Een kleine nederzetting met de naam IJmuiden werd toegelaten voor bewoners, die de onderhoudswerken aan sluizen, kanaal en havens verrichtten. Als vanzelf echter groeide deze kleine nederzetting binnen honderd jaar tot het tegenwoordige grote IJmuiden, waar visserij, handel en industrie een enorme macht zijn geworden en in 1924 het Hoogovenbedrijf werd gesticht. Dit Bedrijf heeft een grote welvaart in geheel Kennemerland gebracht.

Deze roman verhaalt de historie van het moeizaam graven van het Noordzeekanaal: alles handwerk met schop en kruiwagen. Voorts de groei van de gehele landstreek, de eerst erbarmelijke toestanden en beklagenswaardige toestanden van de kanaalgravers, de "polderjongens" en de opkomst van Ijmuiden West en Velseroord. In 1927 werd Velseroord: IJmuiden-Oost. De grootste sluis ter wereld werd in 1930 gebouwd, waarmee IJuiden zich een behoorlijke plaats veroverde in de wereldhandel.

Pieter Vermeulen is de man geweest die onder de polderjongens heeft gewerkt, omdat anderen dit niet wilden; hij werd hoofd van een houten school, niet veel meer dan een barak. Voorts was hij evangelist, godsdienstonderwijzer, maatschappelijk werker, lid van de Gemeenteraad en na het gevestigde IJmuiden lid van de Provinciale Staten.

Nauwelijks kan men zich voorstellen hoe vol moeiten, teleurstellingen en ontberingen zijn leven en dat van zijn vrouw is geweest. Het Noordzeekanaal is de levensader geworden van Amsterdam en hiermede voor geheel Nederland. Kerken en scholen zijn gesticht; Kennemerland is volgebouwd.

Ver in het verleden begonnen en nu een drukke industrie. In 1976 is alles herdacht. Een van mijn broers, Jan. H. Verhoog ontwierp, organiseerde en verzorgde de zeer doorwrochte tentoonstelling "Honderd jaar Noordzeekannal en IJmuiden", die stromen bezoekers trok. Ik had derhalve veel redenen voor Hollandse emigranten in Canada en geinteresseerden, op vele manieren te schrijven over Holland. Pioniers worden snel vergeten. Ik trachtte met het komend vervolgverhaal een kleine palmtak te leggen op de naam: Pieter Vermeulen.

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De Synode der Canadian Reformed Churches[4]

Het was niet alleen over het contact met de Chr. Ref. Church dat deze synode had te handelen. Ook werd een goed deel van de synodale tijd besteed aan de verhouding tot de Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Met deze Kerk, die niet in Canada vertegenwoordigd is, doch alleen gemeenten heeft in de Ver. Staten, hebben de Can. Ref. Churches reeds jaren contact gehad. Door de synode van 1965 was reeds een commissie benoemd, die vele malen met de O.P.C.-commissie heeft gesproken en gecorrespondeerd. Het contact was in het begin tamelijk stroef, wat geen wonder was. De O.P.C. heeft nu eenmaal een andere belijdenis — de Westminster Confessie en de Grote en Kleine Catechismus — en zij hebben een andere kerkregering. Maar wie kennis neemt van de geschiedenis van deze Kerk, benevens van de wijze, waarop zij haar belijdenis handhaaft, moet wel tot de conclusie komen, dat deze Kerk een getrouwe Kerk is van de Here Jezus. Zij is ontstaan in 1936 nadat Prof. Gresham Machen, die bezwaren inbracht tegen het al meer veld-winnende modernisme in de Verenigde Presb. Kerk, werd geschorst.

Het begin was klein, maar de O.P.C. is gegroeid, en heeft haar trouw aan de H. Schrift onverzwakt gehandhaafd. Toen in de na-oorlogse jaren de Geref. Kerken-synodaal in Nederland, met wie de O.P.C. correspondentie onderhield, gaandeweg ernstige dwalingen in haar midden toeliet, heeft de O.P.C. genoemde Kerken steeds gewaarschuwd en tenslotte in 1973 de zusterkerk-relatie verbroken.

De O.P.C. sprak reeds spoedig na het gelegde contact uit, dat zij de Canadian Ref. Churches erkende als een ware Kerk, en hetzelfde werd door de laatsten uitgesproken betreffende de O.P.C. Dat was in 1971, maar tot correspondentie kon het nog niet komen. Teveel nadruk werd er van Can. Ref. zijde gelegd op het verschil tussen beide Kerken in belijdenis en kerkregering. Maar toen bekend werd, dat de Geref. Kerken-vrijgemaakt in Nederland correspondentie hadden aangegaan met de Koreaanse Presb. Kerk, die eveneens de Westminster Confessie heeft, waarbij was uitgesproken, dat deze belijdenis "een voluit Gereformeerd belijdenisgeschrift" is, ja, toen kon men moeilijk dat bezwaar nog volhouden. Er bleef over de wijze van kerkregering. Maar mag men het praedicaat "zusterkerk" onthouden aan een Kerkgemeenschap, die men overigens erkent als een ware Kerk, omdat de wijze van kerkregering anders is?

Zo kwam dan de synode van 1977 bijeen. En op haar tafel lag een brief van het "Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations" van de O.P.C. Dat is de commissie die deze zaken behandelde, wij zouden ze Deputaten noemen. Deze brief bevatte o.a het volgende: (vertaling van mij) "Onze ervaring met U in vorige besprekingen brengt ons tot de overtuiging, dat, hoewel gij niet geheel overtuigd zijt van onze overeenstemming met U in belijdenis en kerkregering, gij veel minder er van overtuigd zijt, dat wij niets meer zouden zijn dan een secte van de valse kerk". En verder: "Onze fouten en tekortkomingen kunnen van die aard zijn, dat zij U verhinderen te komen tot een relatie van correspondentie, zoals gij met andere Kerken hebt. Toch willen wij U vragen of gij aan de andere kant werkelijk van ons kunt zeggen, met het oog op onze getuigenis gedurende bijna veertig jaar in ons land en in de wereld: dat wij meer macht en autoriteit toekennen aan onszelf en aan onze voorschriften dan aan het Woord van God; en dat wij ons niet willen buigen onder het juk van Jezus Christus; dat wij de sacramenten niet toedienen zoals Christus deze in Zijn Woord heeft ingesteld, doch dat wij daaraan toedoen of afdoen; dat wij ons vertrouwen meer op mensen stellen dan op Christus en dat wij vervolgen degenen, die heilig willen leven naar het Woord Gods".

Dit was klare taal, en nu, na twaalf jaar, een uitspraak van de synode moest volgen. En die kwam ook. De synode sprak uit dat, hoewel een zusterkerk-relatie met de O.P.C. niet kon worden aangegaan, gezien de regels van correspondenie van de Can. Ref. Churches, de verhouding van "kerkelijk contact" mogelijk is. Dit is een zachtere vorm van correspondentie en deze wordt nu aan de O.P.C. aangeboden, "in de hoop, dat tenslotte correspondentie, waarin de eenheid van het ware geloof kan worden uitgedrukt, wordt aangegaan".

Ik ben blij met deze uitspraak. Naar mijn bescheiden mening had zij er veel eerder moeten zijn. Maar beter laat dan helemaal niet. Het is te hopen en te wensen, dat de leden van beide kerkverbanden elkaar beter zullen leren kennen en dat ook willen doen. Helaas kunnen de predikanten over en weer nog niet op de kansels worden uitgenodigd. Maar een goed ding zal zijn, als b.v. studieverenigingen de predikanten eens uitnodigen om over een bepaald onderwerp een lezing te komen houden. Als Canadezen met vacantie gaan in de Ver. Staten, zoek een O.P.C. op en ga daar eens naar de kerk. Kortom, leer elkaar kennen.

De O.P.C. heeft 115 gemeenten, alle in de Ver. Staten, met een totaal van ruim 15,000 zielen. Zij zijn zeer actief in zendings — en evangelisatie-werk en hebben 224 predikanten.

Socialisme in D.D.R. een surrogaat-geloof

De radactie van *Weerwoord* een uitgave van het Landelijk Centrum voor Gereformeerd Jeugdwerk, gaat binnenkort naar Oost-Duitsland. Eerst interviewde *Hijme Stoffels* vijf jonge mensen die onlangs een conferentie van de Oekumenische Jeugdraad van Europa in Oost-Duitsland hebben bijgewoond, nl. Magda van Rheede, theologe, Jeff Tracy, een Amerikaan, die een opleiding tot onderwijzer heeft gevolgd en in het kader van de Internationale Jeugduitwisseling in Nederland verblijft, Pieter Lugtigheid, jeugdpredikant in Dordrecht, Bas Smouter, vrijwilliger op het bureau van het gereformeerde jeugdwerk te Rotterdam en Cees Jan Visser, adviseur bij het christelijk jeugdwerk in Friesland. Aan het verslag van hun ervaringen onder de titel *Oostduitse jongeren* ontlenen we het volgende.

Over het systeem:

Bas: 'Het kwam bij mij over als een surrogaat-geloof. De staat heeft een aantal gebruiken van de kerk gewoon overgenomen'. Als je wordt geboren, gaan je ouders met je naar het stadhuis en leggen daar een gelofte af dat ze jou zullen opvoeden tot een echt kind van de DDR. Vier mensen worden uitgenodigd om peetouder te zijn. Zij moeten erop toezien dat jij inderdaad socialistisch wordt opgevoed. Een soort doop, dus.

Als je een jaar of veertien bent, leg je een staatsbelijdenis af, de Jugendweihe. Je zweert dat je je best zult doen om als socialistisch burger de staat te helpen opbouwen. Daarna word je met u aangesproken op school.

Magda: 'Het is niet verplicht, maar doe je het niet, dan kan je niet naar de universiteit, behalve als je theologie gaat studeren'.

Er zijn meer paralellen met de kerk. Op school moeten de leerlingen de slagzinnen en de propagandaverhalen over het voortreffelijke socialisme, over de bloeiende ekonomie, over het dekadente westen uit hun kop leren, zoals wij vroeger de katechismus moesten opdreunen. Jongeren balen van de politieke leuzen die ze ingepompt krijgen, met als gevolg dat ze zich nauwelijks meer voor politiek interesseren en ook maar weinig afweten van het systeem waarin ze leven.

Op school is het niet verplicht om mee te doen aan allerlei aktiviteiten 'om de socialistische staat op te bouwen', zoals in fabrieken en op het land werken. Maar doe je niet mee, dan lig je er in de klas wel uit. Je naam wordt op het bord geschreven. De hardste werkers daarentegen worden voor de klas gehaald en beloond.

Over de positie van de kerk:

Cees Jan: 'De Lutherse kerk is de belangrijkste. De DDR is officieel een atheistische staat en heeft in het verleden op alle mogelijke manieren getracht de kerk het leven zuur, zo niet onmogelijk te maken. Uit gesprekken met kerkmensen heb ik de indruk gekregen, dat dat nu minder is geworden.

Wel is de kerk een minderheid geworden, zonder macht en aanzien. De invloed van de kerk strekt zich alleen uit tot het terrein van het privegeloof. Daarnaast mag de kerk wat aan bejaardenzorg doen'.

Jeff: 'De kerk zou een belangrijke rol kunnen spelen bij de omvorming van het huidige autoritaire systeem in de richting van een socialisme met een menselijker gezicht. Het is echter maar een kleine groep in de kerk die daarnaar streeft. De meesten passen zich zo goed en zo kwaad als het kan aan'.

Magda: 'Sommigen zien de staat echt als de barmhartige Samaritaan bij uitstek. De meeste andere christenen vluchten echter in een binnenkamergeloof en proberen daarbuiten een goed en onopvallend DDR-burger te zijn.

(Overgenomen uit Kerknieuws, 4 nov.)

GOED BURGERSCHAP VERDIENT EEN MEDAILLE

Kent u iemand hier in Ontario, die — door onbaatzuchtigheid, menslievendheid en vriendelijkheid, zonder iets terug te verwachten — dit een betere provinctie heeft gemaakt om in te wonen?

Voor zulke personen is de "Ontario Medal for Good Citizens" (Ontario's Medaille voor goed burgerschap) bestemd.

Gegadigden worden uitgezocht door een onafhankelijke Advies-commissie, bestaande uit inwoners van Ontario. Ere-voorzitter van deze commissie is de luitenant-gouverneur van de provincie.

Iedereen mag een persoon voordragen voor de Ontario Medaille, en formulieren hiervoor kan men verkrijgen door te schrijven aan:

Executive Secretary Advisory Council
Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship
Queen's Park,
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A1.

Door iemand voor te dragen toont men waardering voor goed burgerschap. Alle formulieren moeten binnen zijn per 15 april 1978.

ONTARIO MEDAILLE VOOR GOED BURGERSCHAP

How others see us — Holland Marsh

by Theodore Plantinga

Most readers of Calvinist Contact are familiar with the name Holland Marsh. Holland Marsh is a unique geographical area of extremely fertile land some 30 or 35 miles north of Toronto. If you've ever driven north from Toronto via Highway 400, you went through part of the Marsh.

The Marsh is not a large area, and it does not support a large population. Yet, it does have two Christian Reformed Churches and two Christian schools (now operated as one). The Dutch-Canadians form a community of their own within the Marsh, a community that revolves around the churches and the Christian school. That Marsh community is sufficiently unique and interesting for a York University sociologist to choose to write about it in a book *Family, Kinship and Community*, published by McGraw-Hill Ryerson of Toronto (181 pages, $5.95).

People who live in the Marsh or have lived there in the past will naturally be interested in such a book. I spent two years in the area teaching at the local Christian school. Therefore I was among those who looked forward to the book. But I was in for an unpleasant surprise when I finally got my copy. The book's author, Dr. K. Ishwaran, has ideas of his own about what should and should not be when it comes to religion. Hence much of the book is a veiled attack on what he calls the "religious ideology" of the Marsh.

Before you get the impression that this sociologist has come up with a penetrating critique of our Reformed lifestyle, let me add a word of caution. It is clear from the numerous errors in the factual material in the book that the author has gone about his work in a very sloppy way and is not entirely to be trusted.

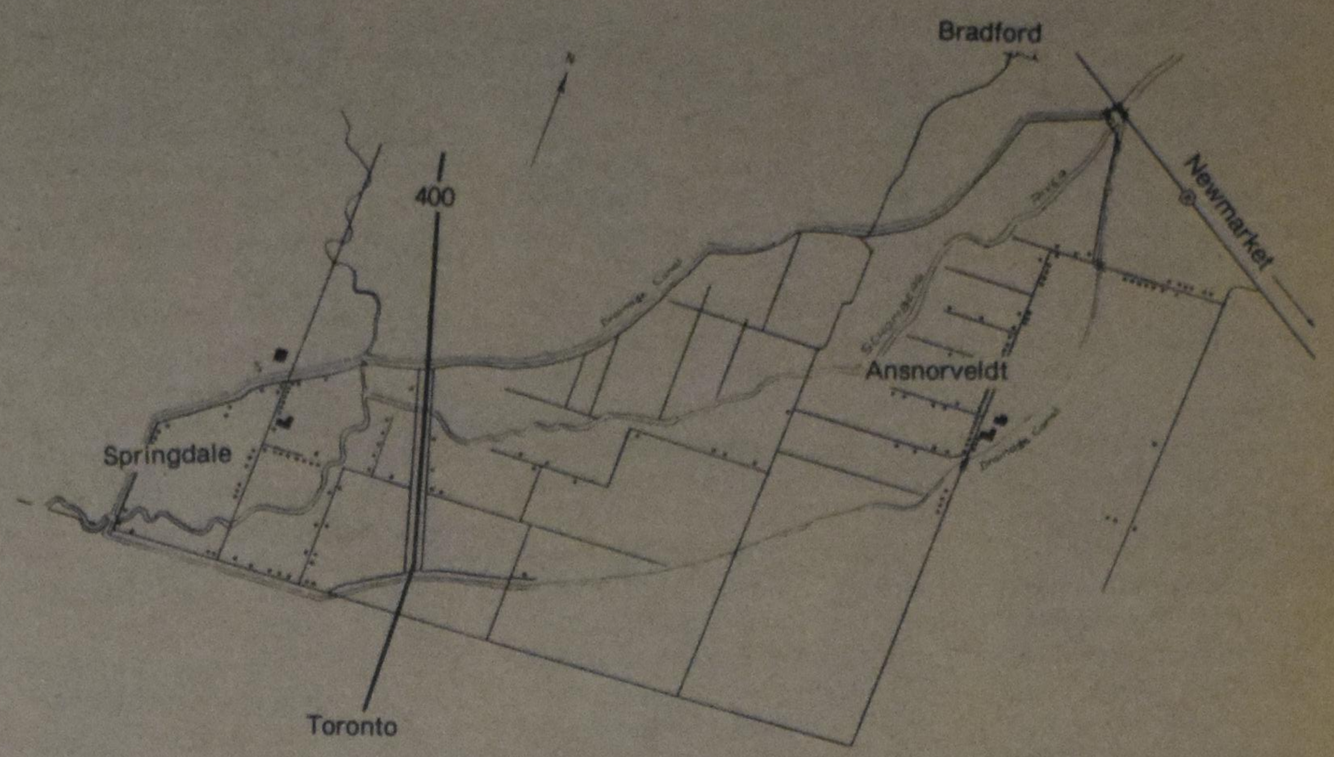
Observers of life in Holland Marsh are acquainted with the basic rivalry between the Marsh proper (the Ansnorveldt community) and the Springdale community. These two communities are really separate ends of the Marsh, with Highway 400 as the dividing line. Each one has its own Christian Reformed Church and its own school building, although the two schools are now operated as one school offering instruction in grades 1-8.

This long-standing rivalry comes to expression in hockey games between the two churches and in many other ways as well, some of them rather nasty. Dr. Ishwaran gets into the act to some extent, for the Ansnorveldt community (the older of the two) comes off looking better than the Springdale community (see pp. 15-16). However, the author does report that he encountered hostility and unwillingness to cooperate with his research project all throughout the Marsh (see pp. viii, 13-14).

The author also takes note of the Marsh's famous reputation as a place to be avoided (p. 49). Apparently Dr. Ishwaran himself also has reason to complain about the Marsh. As we shall see, the Marsh now has good reason to complain about him.

The book was published in 1977. Therefore it seems reasonable to assure that it was being completed in 1974-76. That's exactly the period when I taught at Holland Marsh Christian School. But while I was there, I heard nothing about the book. Neither did the Rev. Max Lise, who came to the Marsh at about the same time I did, to serve as pastor of the Holland Marsh Christian Reformed Church. Thus, the author did not take the trouble to check with the people he was writing about. (Much of the book deals with the church and the school.) If he had, the book would not contain as many errors as it does.

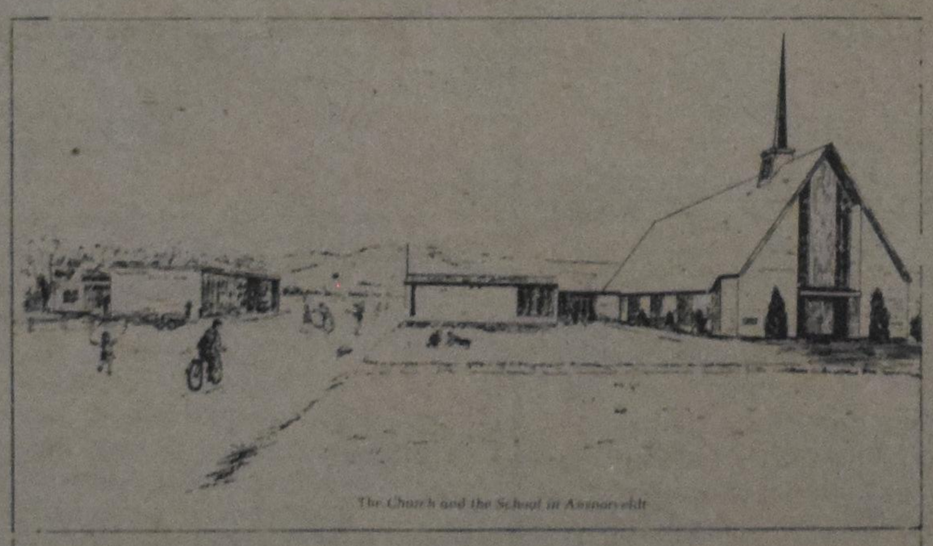
I won't bore you with all the errors, but a few of them are amusing. Apart from the old misconceptions about the Christian school being a denominational school controlled by the church and operated with funds granted by the church, most of the errors involve the church itself. The minister comes off an exceedingly powerful figure, but his term of office is not indefinite. He serves a three to five-year term (p. 72). When the church wants a new minister, it advertises in church bulletins and screens the incoming applications very carefully (p. 72). But once the minister is installed in office, he certainly takes over! He doesn't need much help — he has only five

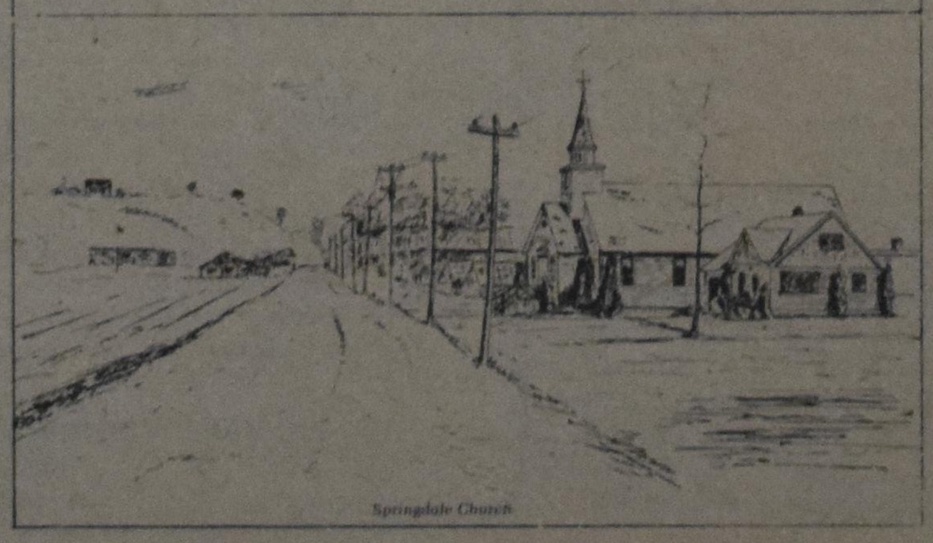


elders (p. 78). The church directory lists nine elders; presumably the author never thought of looking there. And those elders have no reason to complain about all the meetings they have to attend, for the consistory meets only four times per year — in January, March, June, and September (p. 78). I dare say that the elders in the churches in the Marsh will be surprised to hear that the church directory lists two meetings per month! The pastor also serves as chairman of every committee, according to Dr. Ishwaran (p. 78). Wouldn't that be handy in certain situations?

The pastor has a wider role in running the school and community as well as a specialized "technical" role in the worship services. "He baptizes the infant into Calvinism by 'sprinkling,' and then confirms its full participation by conducting the sacraments of communion when the infant reaches the eighth year" (p. 79). Anyone have any idea how he got that into his head?

To top it all off, much of the book is written in sociologist's jargon rather than the ordinary English that a journalist or a historian would use.


The Church and the School in Ansnorveldt


Springdale Church

Still, if you have an interest in the Marsh, the book is worth looking at, if only because of the sketches. The book is also interesting in a second respect — its picture of how faith functions in the daily lives of Reformed people in Canada. It's always worthwhile for us as Christians to pay attention to how others see us.

The book is not a reliable guide to life in the Marsh. It is riddled with misconceptions and errors about mere matters of fact. At the same, Dr. Ishwaran's perspective on the religion of the Reformed Christians of the Marsh is worth looking at (Dr. Ishwaran is not a Christian). How do outsiders, that is, those who do not share our faith, view the connection between faith and worship, on the one hand, and daily life, on the other?

The author's negative attitude toward the "religion" of the Marsh comes through at many points in his book. He uses the term "religious ideology" to sum up the basic outlook of the Marsh Christians. What is the nature of this "religious ideology"? The objective of the Christian school, we read, is "...to train the child to fear the Lord and to perceive the world through a God-centred, ethical, and Biblical framework. This ... leads to a nonscientific, authoritarian, and dogmatic orientation. The authoritarian Marsh church, wedded to fundamentalism, tries hard to ensure that there is no permissiveness in child-rearing and no significant individualism in the family or in the community in matters of social organization. The whole thrust of the church-controlled socialization process is to encourage conformism and discourage social innovation" (p. 167).

Quite a mouthful, wouldn't you say? The social virtues of liberal Humanism are listed in this definition and then denied to the Marsh. Rationalism, individualism, freedom, equality — these are the virtues Dr. Ishwaran finds lacking in the Marsh. To drive his polemical point (argument) home, he pictures the Marsh as a closed community governed by a small handful of people on the basis of essentially arbitrary dictates. He struggles to prove that the social structure of the Marsh is in essence hierarchical. The individual need not think for himself, for he gets his orders from someone above him on the authority ladder. At the top of the ladder stands the minister (the priest), who claims to get his orders and ideas from God. How do the people of the Marsh put their faith into practice in daily life? By taking orders.

Because the social structure is a hierarchy, either the church controls the school or the school controls the church. It is inconceivable to Dr. Ishwaran that the two could cooperate freely without engaging in a power struggle. Thus he decides that the church is supreme.

Now, I take it that all of us know in theory what's wrong with the "religious ideology" presented by Dr. Ishwaran. We are Protestants — not Catholics. We accept God's Word as the final authority and norm for our lives — and we don't need any human mediator to make contact with that Word. Indeed, the Word is very near us. It is because our families, schools, churches and other organizations and institutions subject themselves to the discipline of that Word that we can get along without a hierarchical social structure and authority ladder. And whenever we start to drift away from that Word, trouble breaks out in our Christian community.

Why can't a secular sociologist like Dr. Ishwaran accept the social structure of a Reformed community of believers for what it is? For a simple reason, it seems to me. He rejects central Christian ideas presupposed in such a structure, namely (1) God's Word, (2) faith as a response to that Word, and (3) the working of the Holy Spirit.

To the secular sociologist, what we call God's Word is nothing but a collection of ancient writings that hang together loosely at best. If we find unity in that Word, it's

only because we have put it there. In other words, we develop our own social and ethical ideas and then claim to find them in the Bible. (The clergy are the chief culprits.) Liberal Humanism has been making this accusation for centuries.

To the secular sociologist, what we call faith is really nothing more than credulity, gullibility. The believer is someone who's too lazy or too dumb to think for himself and find things out for himself. A unity of faith is possible only if the real focus of that faith is a religious leader who makes the "believers" swallow the arbitrary ideas that the community lives by. In other words, a religious community is united by its faith in its leader — not by its faith in God. (The secular sociologist has no place for God in his system.)

Finally, the secular sociologist cannot conceive of a divine force at work in a human community. The thought of the Spirit of God guiding a community of believers and bringing people together is sheer fantasy to him. How would you document the operation of such a force in a scientific manner?

Now, if the secular sociologist must rule out God's Word, faith as a response to that Word, and the operation of God's Spirit in the lives of men, how is he to explain what goes on in a Christian community? His narrow, closed outlook does not leave room for much more than the old idea of the religious leader (the clergyman or priest) as the great deceiver who sweeps the ignorant people along. Thus the secular sociologist's outlook on religion and life makes a certain amount of sense, given his presuppositions. But notice how secular presuppositions lead to secular conclusions.

If this secular view of religion is correct, it will only be a matter of time before the ignorant masses become sufficiently educated and enlightened to see through the tricks of the clergy and priests who manipulate them for their own selfish reasons. That's what liberal Humanists already maintained centuries ago. Christianity's days were numbered. The world was growing more secular and enlightened; the churches wouldn't last long. Sociologists simply assumed that the advance of secularism cannot be checked or halted.

These predictions have remained unfulfilled for so long that even some confirmed secularists are beginning to have their doubts. And Dr. Ishwaran, to his credit, is one of them. He writes: "The most important characteristic of the Marsh Dutch-Canadian community is its widespread religiosity; hardly an aspect of its life escapes the touch or regulation of religion. This point becomes an issue in sociological debate for two reasons. First, despite the fact that the Marsh Dutch Canadians are derived from a highly civilized Western society, religion, although it has adapted itself to many influences, has not so far shown any indication of weakening its grip on any aspect of the life of the community. Second, if this is the situation regarding a Western ethnic group transplanted to a Western situation in modern times, then the so-called 'secularism' of modern Western society begins to look like a dubious conclusion. It may well be that we talk about secularism in the Western world simply because we have neglected to study its religiosity in everyday life. If this is a possibility, then the popular distinction between modernized Western societies and traditional non-Western societies tends to become a thin case in this particular context. In other words it will no longer do to assert that Western societies are guided by science and non-Western societies by religion. A different kind of understanding of the relationship between religion and science on the one hand and between Western and non-Western societies on the other will be necessary. This is no insignificant matter for current sociology to become aware of and handle" (pp. 165-6). In other words, "...modernization theorists may have overemphasized the significance of secularism in developed countries" (p. 168).

How do others see us when they look at the relation between religion and daily life? As a social theorist, Dr. Ishwaran has begun to sense that the traditional sociological approach to religion is weak. Let's be thankful for that, at least.

Just how does Christian faith give shape to daily life in the Marsh? I would love to hear a sociologist's answer to this question, for it is a legitimate and very interesting question. But I'm convinced that we'll get a worthwhile answer only from a Christian sociologist, a sociologist who knows that God's work in the world cannot be ignored in our science and scholarship. Let's do all we can to promote social science on such a basis.

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---WORLD WIDE---

'Fill Me Up' Convention

University of Guelph May 19 - 22, 1978

Fill Me Up, is the theme of the fourth All Ontario Y.C. Convention, at the University of Guelph. Bring a friend and join hundreds of other young people for an unforgettable weekend.

Fill Me Up — a special blend of fun, entertainment and inspiration that's only possible when Y.C.'s get together to celebrate life.

The registration fee is $60.00 for members. $65.00 for non-members.
Registrations opens on Jan. 1, 1978.
Registration closes when six hundred (600) registrations have been received.
Please send your completed registration to: Teresa VanDasler, 759 Second St., Apt. 109, London, Ontario N5V 2B8.

Note: Send money orders or cheques only. No postdated cheques. The registration fee minus $10.00 will be refunded for valid cancelations.

Attention Old Soldiers

Those who served in Hoog, Holland and the Dutch East Indies from 1947-50, known as the ANB company. 1-5-4RI now residing in Canada or the U.S.A.: A reunion will be held on the May 27, 1978 in Groningen, The Netherlands.

For more information contact: P. Potstra, Apt. 103, 2 Cherrywood Dr., Stoney Creek, Ont. K8N 2P6. Tel. (416) 664-5157.

Comedy Play

Our gal Sal

PRESENTED BY THE ACTON DRAMA CLUB

Saturday, Jan. 28, 1978 at 7:30 p.m.
Acton District High School

Saturday, Feb. 4, 1978 at 7:30
Georgetown District Christian School

Tickets: $3:00 for adults, $2.50 for children under 16
50 cents less if bought in advance
For more information phone (519) 853-2437

25th Anniversary

The congregation of the

Calvin Christian Reformed Church of Ottawa

Extends a warm and special invitation to all former members to join us in the celebrations

Social Evening
Friday — January 27, 1978 at 7:30 p.m.
Laurentian High School, 1357 Baseline

Old Timers Fellowship Evening
Saturday — January 28, 1978 at 7:30 p.m.
Calvin Christian Reformed Church

Special Anniversary Service
Sunday — January 29, 1978 at 7 p.m.
Knox Presbyterian Church, Elgin at Lisgar Sts.

For accommodation, further information or an Anniversary Book, please contact Mrs. Jane Pranger, 16 Trillium Ave., Ottawa, Ont. K2E 5M9. (Tel: 613/224-1796).

Calendar of events

Jan. 28 Comedy play "Our gal Sal" at 7:30 p.m. at the Acton District High School.

Feb. 4 Comedy play "Our gal Sal" at 7:30 p.m. at the Georgetown District Christian School.

Canadian Reformed Theological College lecture series.

Feb. 2- Five consecutive Thursdays, 8 p.m., college building, 374 Queen St. S., Hamilton, Rev. G. Van Dooren, lecturer. Theme: The teaching ministry of the church: the preaching ministry, teaching the four fundamentals, training for the offices, talents for building up the Body, equipped for Kingdom service. Admission is free.

"How should we then live?" by Dr. Francis Schaeffer. The 10 episode film series portraying the rise and decline of western thought and culture. A documentary spectacular, which was more than 2½ years in the making and shot in more than 100 locations in 12 countries.
Location: Lambton Christian High School, Corner Russel & Essex, Sarnia, Ontario.
Times: January 20, 7:30 p.m.; January 21, 2:00 p.m.; January 27, 7:30 p.m., January 28, 2:00 p.m.; February 3, 7:30 p.m.; Feb 4, 2:00 p.m.
Each film will be introduced by a moderator and discussions on these films will follow the showings.

Next issues of C.C.:

Dated	Mailed	Ad deadline
Jan. 20	Jan. 18	Jan. 16
Jan. 27	Jan. 25	Jan. 23
Feb. 3	Feb. 1	Jan. 30

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Notes of Thanks

HOGENDOORN: We sincerely thank our children and grandchildren, great grand children, relatives and friends for all the good wishes, gifts, letters and cards received on our 60th anniversary. Also the services of the Ladies from the Cambridge Christian Reformed Church, both at the family dinner and open house were very much appreciated. Above all we thank the Lord for His blessings in all those years.
Mr. & Mrs. P. Hogendoorn, R.R. #6 Cambridge, Ontario.

JANSEN: Mr. & Mrs. S.B. Jansen thank all the many relatives and friends who sent flowers, cakes, cards and remembered in such a special way our golden anniversary. The day will never be forgotten and we wish to thank everyone for helping to make our day such a memorable one for us.

Births

BEZEMER: The Lord blessed us with a lovely baby girl on Jan. 2, 1978. We named her MARIA-LYNN ANNETTE. Very thankful parents are Ann and Clement Bezemer. A welcome sister for Katharine, William and Clement. Grimsby, Ont.

BONVANIE: God blessed us with our second child, a son, DOUGLAS HENRY born December 25, 1977, a brother for Gilbert Jonathan. The happy parents are Barend and Hennie Bonvanie (nee Haringa). 74 Frederick St., R.R. #6 Woodstock, Ont. N4S 7W1.

DYKSTRA: The Lord has richly blessed our home with the birth of KATHERINE JOYCE on December 22, 1977, a new sister for Meredith, Ricky and Patricia and a new granddaughter for Mr. & Mrs. J. Mein of St.Catharines and Mrs. R. Dykstra of Hamilton. Richard and Ina Dykstra, 86 Colebrook Court, Kitchener, Ont. N2E 1Y8.

HERREWYNEN: We thank the Lord who has blessed us with a second daughter, TRISHA NADINE born December 30, 1977. A sister for Wende. 14th grandchild for Mr. & Mrs. Jack Herrewynen, Jarvis, Ont. and 13th grandchild for Mr. & Mrs. Oega Miedema, Vergennes, Vermont. Proud and happy parents are Jack and Gert Herrewynen, 1438 Allangrove Dr., Burlington, Ont. L7M 1J6.

TALSTRA: Thankful to God, we are happy to announce the birth of our second child CHRISTY ALBERTHA, born on December 26, 1977. She is a sister to Michael Douwe. The happy parents, Jack and Hilda Talstra.

TERPSTRA: Don and Theresa thank the Lord for the safe arrival of their first child, a son, JUSTIN EVERETT born December 28,1977. Eighth grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. R. Beintema, Watford, Ont. First grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. E. Terpstra, Mt. Brydges, Ont.

Births

REITSMA: Our loving God richly blessed us by entrusting to our care a daughter, SHARON ARLENE, on December 27, 1977. 6th grandchild for Mr. & Mrs. Aart Jongejan of Goderich and 8th grandchild for Mr. & Mrs. Thys Reitsma of Hamilton. "Yes Lord, let your constant love surround us, for our hopes are in you alone." Ps. 33:22
Thankful parents: Garry and Audrey Reitsma of Brantford, Ontario.

UYESUGI: We have received a beautiful gift from the Lord, JANINE MASAYE born on Dec. 30, 1977. "Children are a heritage of the Lord." Ps. 127:3
Thankful parents, Steve and Margarethe (nee Bos), Box 3405, Smithers, B.C. V0J 2N0.

Marriages

WYMENGA-SINKE: The children of EEUWE WYMENGA and GRACE SINKE are happy to announce the marriage of their parents on January 9, 1978 in the St. Thomas First Christian Reformed Church. Rev. Gordon D. Mouw officiating. They have chosen as their wedding text: "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad". Psalm 126:3
St. Thomas, Ont.—George & Tilly Wymenga; Tricia
Wilco & Betty Wymenga; Mark
Thunder Bay, Ont.—Angela & Peter VanderHooft; Michael, Colin, Kevin
Taber, Alta.—Wilma & Hank Bakkering
Future address: 34 Dyer St. Thomas, Ont. N5R 5K3.

Anniversaries

Fruitland Mount Hope
1953 1978
We are happy and thankful to God that on January 24th, we hope to celebrate the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our parents,

PHILIP DEYS and
MARY DEYS (nee Knegt)

Open house will be held on January 28th from 2-5 p.m. (Saturday) in the Binbrook Memorial Hall. Their thankful children,
Hamilton—Fred and Deb
London—Bill and Carol
Mount Hope—Linda, Rick, Mary-Anne, Eric
Home address: Mount Hope, P.O., Mount Hope, Ont. L0R 1W0.

1953 1978
Stroobos Acton
O Lord of hosts, blessed be the man who trusts in thee! Psalm 84:12
With joy and thankfulness to God, we like to congratulate our parents,

JOHN & EDITH KAMMINGA
(nee Barkmeijer)

on their 25th anniversary on January 22, 1978.
Their thankful children:
Webb and fiancee Sandy
Gerald
Betty
Ken
Open house Jan. 21, 1978 from 2-4 p.m. at Acton Band Hall.
Home address: 189 Jeffrey Avenue, Acton, L7J 1V8.

With thanks to God, we announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

OTTO VEENENDAAL
and
DIRKJE VEENENDAAL
(nee Van den Bos)

on January 21, 1978. For those who would like to share with us in extending best wishes, there will be an open house on Saturday, January 21, 1978, 2:30 to 5:00 at the London Parental Christian School, 202 Clark Rd., London, Ont.
Their children:
Gordon & Jeanette
Evert (Kip)
Grandchildren:
Timmy & Chris

Anniversaries

Dixie, Ont. Moorefield
1953 1978
The Lord willing on Jan. 17, 1978 we hope to celebrate the 25th wedding anniversary of our parents,

SID and MARGARET SIKKEMA
(nee Bolt)

We pray that the Lord will continue to bless and keep them in the years to come.
Their thankful children
Palmerston, Ont.—Margaret & Henry Stevens
Listowel, Ont.—Janet
Cochrane, Ont.—Ralph & Grace Sikkema
Guelph, Ont.—Peter
At Home—Debby, Grace & Doug
A reception will be held on Friday, January 20, 1978 in the Moorefield Community Center at 8:30 p.m.
Home Address: R.R. #3 Moorefield, Ont. N0G 2K0.

Obituaries

On Saturday, December 17, 1977 the Lord took home, after an illness of about 4 months, our beloved wife, mother and grandmother, at the age of 55.

CORNELIA (Corry) DEVRIES
(nee Vanderwoerdt)

Williamsburg, Ontario.
Beloved wife of Hendrik A. DeVries
Dear mother of
Connie Ann-John Schuler
John Martin
Alice
Linda Christine
All at home
Step-mother of
Cornelius DeVries and Bert of Belleville, Ontario
Fred DeVries and Marjorie; Danny, Mark and Julie
of Winchester, Ontario.
Funeral service was held at Williamsburg Christian Reformed Church on December 20 at 2 p.m. Rev. Leonard Schalkwyk officiated. Interment was in Union Cemetery, Williamsburg, Ontario.

On December 29, 1977, the Lord took unto Himself our much loved son and brother,

HENRY HARBERS

at the age of 38, beloved husband of Nellie Harbers and dear father of Bill and Ken. Our comfort is that he now is with his Lord whom he served so faithfully and confessed so openly. We trust that the Lord will also be with Nellie and the boys in the future as He has been in the past. Psalm 27:13-14
Brinston, Ont.—Mrs. D.A. Harbers (mother)
Bill & Myntje Harbers
Ottawa—Harry & Ann Harbers
Dora & Jake van Leur
Winchester Spring—Gerda & Bill DeJong
Inkerman—Willemien & Herman Grotenhuis
Cobden—Riek & Cor Rook
and nephews and nieces.

Romans 8:38-39
After a lengthy illness the Lord called home our son in law and brother in law

HENRY HARBERS

beloved husband of our sister and daughter Nellie and father of Billy and Kenny on Thursday, December 29, 1977.
Acton—Mr. & Mrs. John van Arragon
Ali & John Looyenga
Atikokan—Jack & Laura van Arragon
Kentville, N.S.—Anne & Bill Hutten
Kampen, Holland—George & Freda van Arragon
Acton—Dolf
Willy & Mike DeJong
Petrolia—Gertie & John Krale
Timmins—John & Anne van Arragon
Elmira—Margaret & Laverne Brubacher
Georgetown—Dirk & Susan van Arragon
and nephews and nieces

Obituaries

After a lengthy but patiently borne illness, the Lord in His mercy took unto His Heavenly Glory our friend,

HENRY HARBERS

We commend to the care of our Heavenly Father, his wife Nellie and sons Billy and Kenny.
Psalm 73:26. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.
Harry & Linda Ensing
George & Corrie Vos
Jake & Jennie Kulken
Acton, Ontario

The Ladies Societies "Sursum Corda" and "Forward in Faith" of the Acton Christian Reformed Church extends its sincere Christian sympathy to their member Mrs. Nellie Harbers and sons Billy & Kenny in the passing away of their dear husband and father,

HENRY HARBERS

on December 29, 1977.
Matthew 5:4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Op 9 januari 1978, overleed mijn geliefde echtgenoot, onze zorgzame vader, grootvader en overgrootvader

REINDER JAKOB KOOI

op de leeftijd van 79 jaar.
Grie Kooi-Engel
Ina en Fred Kuntz-Kooi
Christine en John
Reinder en Johanna
Fred
Angela
Piet en Gerda Kooi-Vanhaelen
Reinder en Karen
Jean
Margaret en Joe
Christine
Ray en Tina Coleman-Visscher
John
Jeanine
en 4 achterkleinkinderen.
Deut. 32:11 & 12 en Openbaringen 21. De begrafenis heeft plaats gevonden op donderdag 12 januari, 1978 on 1:30 n.m. Vanuit Robinson Funeral Home, Ancaster, Ont. op de White Chapel Memorial Gardens.
121 Calvin St., Ancaster, L9G 2G8.

On December 26, 1977 the Lord in His infinite wisdom took unto Himself our dearly beloved daughter and sister in law

SHERRY LIEUWEN

at the age of 31 years.
Wife of Jake Lieuwen and mother of three children.
We mourn...but not as those who have no hope.
Mr. & Mrs. F. Lieuwen and Fam.
Houston, B.C.

Op de leeftijd van 83 jaar heeft God thuis gehaald zijn kind, mijn geliefde man, onze zorgzame vader, grootvader en overgrootvader.

MARTEN ROZEMA

na een gelukkige echtvereniging van 56 jaar.
Psalm 42 vers 1 oude berijming.
Oldehove (Gr.) 3 Dec. 1977.
Ebelina Groenveld
Oldehove (Gr.)—J. Rozema
Euvelgunne (Gr.)—P. Berends-Rozema, K.H. Berends
Edmonton, Alta.—M. Rozema, W.C. Rozema-DeVries
Tofield, Alta.—P. Rozema, T.J. Rozema-Musschenga
Niehove (Gr.)—S. Meindertsma-Rozema, A. Meindertsma
Oldehove (Gr.—G. Rozema
Niehove (Gr.)—H. Rozema
G.E. Rozema-DeVries
Oldehove (Gr.)—R. Rozema, T. Rozema-Offringa
klein en achterkleinkinderen.
De begrafenis heeft plaats gehad op 7 December 1977 te Oldehove (Gr.)

**Do you appreciate C.C.?
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Give them a subscription.**

Obituaries

Safe in the arms of Jesus
On December 27, 1977 our Lord called home our dear Father and Grandfather after many years being a patient at St.Peters Centre in Hamilton.

GERM TOLSMA

at the age of 72 years.
Predeceased by his dear wife Reintje in 1974.
The Lord is my Light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? Ps. 27:1
Gerben & Betty Tolsma; Joannie, Annette and Patricia.
163 Mary Street, Goderich, Ont. N7A 3A7.

Suddenly on December 23, 1977 the Lord in His Wisdom took unto Himself to be with him in glory our precious son and brother and grandson

CORNELIUS (Con) WESTERHOUD

at the age of 19.
I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made the heaven and the earth.
Psalm 121:1,2
Dearly loved by his parents:
Taber, Alta.—Tim & Clara Westerhoud
Brothers and Sisters:
Fanny, Linda, Andy, and Michael.
Grandparents:
Picture Butte-Alta.—Mrs. A. Dykstra
Taber-Alta.—Mr. & Mrs. Cornelius Westerhoud.

Christian and heartfelt sympathies are extended to Mr. & Mrs. Tim Westerhoud, Mr. & Mrs. C. Westerhoud Sr. and their families, at the sudden passing away of their son, brother and grandson,
CORNELIUS (Cor) WESTERHOUD
age 19.
The Consistory, Taber Christian Reformed Church.

Personal

Vader met 2 zoons, middelbare leeftijd vraagt Chr. Ref. huishoudster. Zend brieven onder: #4245, Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara St., St.Catharines, Ont. L2R 4L3.

Christian reformed widower, just over 60 years of age, living in central Ontario, would like to meet friendly christian lady between 50 and 60 years old. Writing can be done in Dutch or English. Please write to Box 4246, Calvinist Contact 99 Niagara Street, St.Catharines, Ont. L2R 4L3.

Teachers Needed

BRANTFORD:
Because of family circumstances the Brantford Christian School is urgently in need of a teacher for combined grades 1 and 2 (18 students) as soon as possible. Please forward applications to Mr. William Slofstra, Princ., Brantford Christian School, 7 Calvin St., Brantford, Ont. N3S 3E4. Phone: (519) 752-0433 (school) or 753-9557 (home).

GUELPH: The John Calvin Christian School is in need of a teaching principal for 1978-79. Please direct inquiries to: Agnes Struik, principal 290 Water St., Guelph, Ont. N1G 1B8. Telephone: School (519) 824-8860 or home (519) 822-4462.

HANEY-PIT MEADOWS: The Haney-Pitt Meadows Christian Elementary School will be in need of a principal-teacher for Sept. 1978. Preference will be given to applicants who possess a B.A. or B.Ed. degree. Salary will be in accordance with N.U.C.S. standard. Please supply a short resume of qualifications, experience, and general background with your letter of application. Forward all applications to: Mr. F. Groenewold, Chairman, Education Committee, Haney-Pitt Meadows Christian School Association, c/o 12129 Lillian St., Maple Ridge, B.C. V2X 6Y9.

Classified Advertising

Real Estate

CARILLON REALTY LIMITED
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The Search Committee of the Board of the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools invites applications for the position of

Executive Director

of the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools. OACS is a service organization oriented to the needs of its 60 member schools in Ontario. The OACS is District X of the National Union of Christian Schools. The specific aims and objectives of the OACS and a specific task description is available upon request. Please direct inquiries and correspondence to:

W.H. Hultink, Convener,
OACS Search Committee
547 West Fifth Street
Hamilton, Ontario
L9C 3P7
1-416-388-0435

Interviews with interested applicants will be scheduled as soon as possible. The position is presently under an interim arrangement. The successful applicant should be available by June 30th, 1978 or prior if possible.

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Edmonton Christian Schools

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Edmonton is a modern city which is growing rapidly. This is also reflected in the four Edmonton Christian Schools. Over fifty educators serve the K-12 student body of eleven hundred students under a single School Board of Trustees. In order to assist in maintaining a vibrancy in the schools the Board provides fine facilities, positive working conditions and an attractive salary schedule.

Educators interested in joining a system which is working diligently to place the claim of Christ more fully in education as a teacher or co-ordinator, both now or in the future, are invited to contact us.

L. Hollaar, Principal
13470 Fort Road, Edmonton
Alta. T5A 1C5 (403) 475-2818

R.C. bishops speak out

Continued from page 8

the building of a kingdom based on justice and love. By the grace of baptism, we are remade in the image of God and plunged into a new life. Our participation in the Eucharist announces the glory that is to come and introduces us, even now, to the kingdom that the Father has promised us. To these gifts of God we must reply by endless conversion, reconciliation and penance. Thus we place ourselves under the law of Christ and keep the Covenant with Him. The spirit of the Beatitudes challenges Christians to transform the world in the name of Jesus. It inspires them to become peacemakers, merciful, pure in heart, poor in spirit, hungry and thirsty for justice, even when afflicted and persecuted.

Discerning the Gospel's Message

God wills that the Gospel should transform not just our personal and private life but also all social and public behaviour, that is, the attitudes, customs, laws and structures, of the world in which we live. He calls on us to build a more humane and fraternal world, in which injustice and violence no longer threaten, where no one person fears another, and where the resources of His creation are developed to supply what all people need for a decent life. It is up to Christian communities, Pope Paul VI has emphasized, "to analyze with objectivity the situation which is proper to their own country, to shed on it the light of the Gospel's unalterable words and to draw principles of reflection, norms of judgement and directives for action from the social teachings of the Church". Applying the Gospel in this way to our own times, you are better able to identify and evaluate what is going on around us and make a positive contribution to human development.

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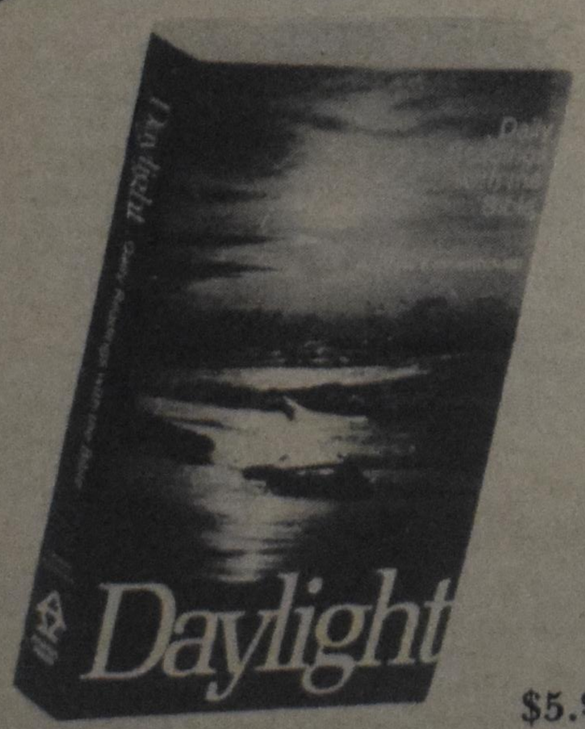

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Luke 23:44-9 **March 19**

GOOD-NIGHT

Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit (Luke 23:46).
As they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59).

The last word that Jesus uttered is a word our children pray when they go to bed: "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep."

The cross—what a deathbed! What a strange place to say good-night. Yet, it is the only place where we can learn how to die.

Jesus is our teacher in all areas and at all times. He has showed us how to live; He will teach us how to die. When we have learned how to live, we must not be afraid that we won't know how to die. The Teacher will be there.

Ever since Jesus' death, the dying of Christians has been called "falling asleep." Even the violent death of Stephen, when the rocks cracked his skull, is called falling asleep. "And when he had said this, he fell asleep" (Acts 7:60).

There is a Christian surgeon who returned to the Lord through the prayer of a child. Six-year-old Johnny was very ill, but he didn't know it. The doctor and the nurse came to get him, in an almost desperate attempt to save his life by surgery. They wheeled his bed from the children's ward to the operating room. The doctor was very fond of the boy. "Now I am going to give you a prick in your arm, and then you are going to sleep."

"Am I going to sleep?"

"Yes, you are."

"But then I must first say my prayer."

And the little white figure worked himself up on his knees, closed his eyes, and folded his hands. While God, the doctor and the nurses listened, he said: "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep."

Johnny never woke up. He really "fell asleep."

But that night the doctor whispered: "Father, into Thy hands I commit . . . my life."